

# CORNISH REVIEW

GRANITE . . . . .	M. E. Borg-Banks
ODE OF ACCUSATION . . . . .	Wallace Nichols
HUDSON MEMORIAL . . . . .	W. J. Strachan
THE SEA-WRAITH . . . . .	Geoffrey H. Johnson
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THE CHOUGH AND THE ERMIN . . . . .	Helena Charles
THE ROMANCE OF Porthcurno CABLE STATION	Sir Stanley Angwin
CORNWALL'S AMATEUR POETS . . . . .	John Penwith
CORNISH CHURCHES . . . . .	G. C. James
MY WORK AS A PRINTER . . . . .	Guido Morris
D. H. LAWRENCE IN CORNWALL : I. Lawrence and the Cornish . . . . .	Mark Holloway
II. The Tregerthen Episode . . . . .	David Lewis
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# THE CORNISH REVIEW

EDITED BY DENYS VAL BAKER

AUTUMN 1949

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## COMMENTARY

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THIS third and autumn issue of the *Cornish Review* appears towards the close of what has undoubtedly been Cornwall's most successful holiday season since the end of the war. After an uneasy lag in the spring, the invasion of visitors began in earnest. Once again the trains and long-distance buses West were packed, the roads as busy with cars as petrol rationing would allow. Once again hotels and boarding-houses were full, and custom flowed busily into shops and cafés, cinemas and theatres. Even the weather clerk, perhaps infected with the general enthusiasm, switched on his best brand of summery weather, of that almost tropical intensity which Cornwall alone knows in the British Isles. Farmers harvested hay and corn, fruit and potatoes, earlier and under better conditions than for years. Everywhere there was a very good "ration" of colour and life : witness the Helston Furry Dance, Padstow Hobby Horse, and the series of summer carnivals and regattas, from Looe to Mousehole, and from St. Just up the north coast to Bude and Mr. Horler. Of course, there were minor drawbacks—a sweets shortage, bus queues, some complaints of overcharging, and undoubtedly a reduced spending power among visitors. But it was, as one newspaper recorded, a good "old-fashioned summer".

This is all to the good. Catering for the holiday-maker has become Cornwall's newest and perhaps largest industry. It provides employment for thousands. Waitresses, cooks, coach drivers, shop assistants, boatmen, ice-cream men, artists, repertory actors, photographers—there is no end to the variety of trades and professions whose fate in Cornwall is now so largely dependent on that rather mythical sounding species, the holiday-maker. And the more holiday-makers there are, the more work there will be : so runs the apparently logical argument. In fact, it is a dangerous sort of logic, somewhat like saying the sun will shine more brightly so long as there are no clouds. For the fact is that catering for holiday-makers is a luxury industry. Some change in world affairs, an

economic slump, even such a purely commercial development as an immense cheapening of travel abroad—and the balloon, if it does not burst, will be greatly deflated. Already there are signs that fewer people can afford to take holidays. The fact that, even so, such large numbers of people still travelled long distances to spend their holidays in Cornwall (fifty per cent of visitors to Penzance came from the North) is indeed a tribute to the immense attraction of the Cornish Riviera as a holiday playground. But it is no guarantee for the future. Many holiday resorts on the East Coast of England were practically ruined by the restrictions imposed during the last war. In a purely commercial sense, slumps or changes of fashion can be just as damaging as wars.

These views are not framed in the shape of a wet blanket. It would be difficult to conceive a more pleasant place for holiday-making than Cornwall, and it is right and proper that it should remain so. But there is such a thing as organic growth. The life of man, and of mankind, derives from the land, and thenceforth outwards, through crafts and industries. If the root is healthy, then there is every reason to develop outwards, to the very frothy extremity—which, in such an analogy, catering for holiday-makers would seem to be. If the basis is solid, the building can be extended without worry. But only a short-sighted person would concentrate on decorating the third floor before taking a look at the foundations. Is there not a possibility of such a situation existing in Cornwall, beneath the flurry of holiday statistics and railway posters, guide-books and mystery trips? Anyone who inquires into the state of Cornish industries to-day must, in honesty, reply “Yes, there is.” Cornwall’s basic industries—mining, fishing and agriculture—are not functioning as they should. A fourth, the china clay industry, seems in a healthy state, and is indeed the second biggest exporting industry in Britain, next to coal. But in the three other industries progress is continually handicapped by variations (to put it politely) in Government policy. After encouraging Cornish fishing interests to start a canning industry, the Government subsequently arranges to import £300,000,000 worth of tinned pilchards from America, 150,000,000 tons of sardines from Portugal, and 50,000,000 tons of other canned fish from Norway. Under the same somewhat incoherent policy the Government subsidizes the growth of broccoli and then, about the same time as the hopeful growers are about to market their crops, imports large quantities of broccoli from Italy. A great deal of talk has been going on about reviving tin mining in Cornwall, memorandums have been flying backwards and forwards—but the Government remains securely entrenched behind a morass of official committees and working party

reports. And Cornish mines, which only twenty years ago produced £2,000,000 a year, now produce £461,000 a year. (A hundred years ago the tin mines employed 27,000 people, in the estimate of Sir Charles Lemon : to-day the figure would be around 1,000.)

These are official or Government obstacles. There are others, nearer at home. The children of miners and fishermen and farmers are not so ready to follow their fathers under the earth and over the sea and into the fields. They would rather make more money with less effort. Who can blame them in these days, when official policy seems to have as its foremost plank the raising of wages to a maximum and the reduction of working hours to a minimum, so that people may have even more time to wonder what to do with themselves ? It is the great fallacy of this age, and it would be a pity to see it take root in Cornwall, that more leisure and less work will produce a happier people. Improve the conditions of work, yes ; raise the standard of craftsmanship, yes ; but reduce the necessity or opportunity for work, and you reduce the necessity or opportunity for life. Is there any more unhappy and frustrated man, provided he remains in good health, than the man who has been forced by rules to retire from his lifelong work, in order to sit around reading the newspapers, listening to the wireless, and waiting to die ? We were born not only to procreate, but to create. The art of creation is an integral part of each one of us. In some it takes the form of cultivating the land, in others playing the piano, in some mining the earth, in others exploring the stratosphere. The impulse of creation is still there to-day. Perhaps the very weight of the obstacles provided by modern mass production conditions, Government and union regulations, etc., is producing a reaction. The Leach Potteries at St. Ives have received no fewer than four hundred applications from young men and women of the post-war era who want to become potters, to take up work which they can see and feel as creative. It is extremely doubtful whether the first anxious thought of these people is, will I only have to work the minimum union hours ? Their first thought is rather a desire—a desire to work at creating the things they want to create.

And that, to bring the argument back to its main road, is surely the best basis for organizing industries, including Cornish industries. If only people can be inspired with the creative nature of work, they will surely make better workpeople. If, on top of that, they can be provided with the opportunity to do the work they wish to do, then far better

results will be obtained than by any amount of coercive direction of labour. So long as inept Government restrictions ruin markets for Cornish fishermen, miners and farmers, both opportunity and incentive are obliterated, anyway. It is imperative that these restrictions should be loosened, that schemes for expansion of all three industries be put through at once. But even then there is much that can be done by Cornwall's own authorities. In the schools a great deal more could be done to make children aware of their own heritage. A careful study of the fishing and tin industries, including personal visits to various centres, would be of far more value than some abstruse lesson on the rivers of China, or an account, however exciting, of the battle of Agincourt. Good work is being done by such bodies as the Cornish Rural Industries Bureau, which helps to provide equipment for craftsmen and generally strives to expand the four hundred crafts still existing in the county. An excellent annual feature is the Royal Polytechnic Society's Annual Cornish Industries Exhibition, held at Falmouth recently. Falmouth was also the centre for a recent "Cornwall Can Make It and Sell It" Exhibition, organized by the Falmouth Chamber of Commerce : and next year a big Cornish Industries Fair is to be held at Truro. This sort of thing multiplied, to include showing all over Cornwall of films about Cornish industrial life, is badly needed in the Duchy. The more conscious the Cornish people become of their native crafts and industries, the more likely they are to return to them. When this becomes so, then indeed the county can afford to develop its holiday-making "third floor" to an unlimited extent. But until then let us hope that first things are put first—that, for instance, the hundreds of men employed on widening roads for the benefit of holiday visitors might be put to work laying down water-pipes to the scores of Cornish villages still dependent for supplies on wells and streams. The Cornish Riviera will, in the long run, be all the better for it.

• • • • •

Work is an essential part of culture, and it is with the cultural life of Cornwall in its broadest sense that this magazine is concerned. Previous issues have contained articles about fishing, pottery and engineering, and in the present issue readers will find Sir Stanley Angwyn's fascinating history of the development of the world-important cable station at Porthcurno, and Guido Morris's account of his work as a jobbing printer in Cornwall. Work of past generations of Cornishmen and women is also referred to by C. C. James in his article on "Cornish Churches", and by Frank Michell in his knowledgeable "Portrait of Redruth". But work

is not the whole of culture : there remain people and places, painters and poets (even when they are of the somewhat dubious category analysed so wittily by John Penwith). Equally, perhaps more, important is the question of language. English may have been for some time the language in Cornwall, but it was not always so, and even to-day Cornish is by no means dead. In an article in our next issue A. S. D. Smith traces the fluctuating fortunes of the Cornish tongue—meantime, in this issue, Helena Charles outlines the many links between Cornwall and her Celtic sister nation, Brittany.

The Cornish Gorsedd was held for the twenty-second year in succession last month. This year the ceremony took place on Gwallon Downs, between St. Austell and Charlestown, around the Menhir, a stone of some twelve feet in height, connected with many legends of the past. The exigencies of going to press make it impossible to give a full account of this year's event now, but it is hoped in an early issue to publish an article around the whole subject of the Gorsedd, past, present and future. Meantime it can be noted that the gathering on Gwallon Downs, attended by many hundreds of people, more than justified the far-off enthusiasm of those pioneers who launched the first Gorsedd at Boscowen Un in 1928. As in previous years, parties of members of Old Cornwall Societies from all over Cornwall paraded with their own banners, following the impressive procession of blue-robed bards and initiates. A welcome feature was the attendance of a small delegation of members of the Welsh Gorsedd three white-robed Druids, Canon Maurice Jones, late Principal of St. David's College (one of the group of bards who, in 1928, invested the Cornish Gorsedd with its authority), Edgar Phillips, the sword-bearer of the Welsh Gorsedd, and Dr. Leigh Henry. The ceremony took place on Saturday, September 3rd, and was followed on the Sunday by a service in the Cornish language at the parish church of St. Austell. The service was taken by the Rev. A. Lane-Davies, Vicar of St. Cleer, with benediction by the Rev. Canon E. Roberts, Vicar of St. Austell, and the address, translated into Cornish by A. S. D. Smith, was read by Edwin Chirgwin ("Map Melyn").

The Gorsedd marked yet another step in the steady expansion of Cornish ceremonial activities. During the summer the Summer Festival of the Federation of Old Cornwall Societies, held at Padstow, attracted more than three hundred representatives of the various Old Cornwall Societies. Midsummer Night in June was celebrated with fires and ceremonies on many Cornish hills, including Castle-an-Dinas, Trencrom

and St. Cleer Downs, while there have been many archaeological and other expeditions. Tribute to this development may be recognized in the fact that at this year's Celtic Congress at Bangor, North Wales, when the Cornish delegation, through Ashley Rowe, extended an invitation for next year's Congress to be held in Cornwall, the invitation was accepted. At the Congress Edwin Chirgwin read a paper in Cornish on "The Rebellion of 1549", A. J. Shimmin spoke on the works of the late Canon Gilbert Doble, and Mrs. Ashley Rowe gave an account of the activities of *Kelgh Keltek*, the inter-Celtic correspondent society.

Besides pleasing holiday-makers the "old-fashioned" summer brought out the archaeologists in full swarm. In many parts of Cornwall parties have been at work, excavating old ruins and settlements, patiently adding tiny fragments to the immensely important pattern of evidence about our past civilizations. At Maen Castle, half-way between Land's End and Sennen Cove, members of the West Cornwall Field Club, directed by the Rev. C. B. Crofts, Rector of St. Buryan, exposed the general layout of an ancient settlement near the village. It is thought that the settlement was used in conjunction with the Celtic field system on the same slope. Pottery, flints, slate, beads and other domestic items, some estimated as being 2,250 years old, have been among the discoveries.

Some shocks to preconceived ideas have been administered by Dr. Stanley Jones, whose extensive researches in the Chysauster area, combined with an expert scientific training in the history of Cornish mining, have led him to conclude that prehistoric hut clusters in West Cornwall were not dwelling-places at all but tin-dressing stations. But perhaps the most interesting developments are reported from St. Martin's in the Scilly Isles. There the work begun by the Rev. H. A. Lewis and continued by Mr. B. H. St. John O'Neil, Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments, and his wife, has revealed fresh evidence of links between the Isles and Mediterranean civilizations of a thousand years before Christ. Last year excavations resulted in the finding of a burial chamber at Knackyboy Cairn, containing funeral urns of Mediterranean design. This year, operating at English Island Cairn, the archaeologists have uncovered a Bronze Age habitation, consisting of a rectangular house with three levels of occupation. Pottery, weaved cloth, and other remnants suggest that the earlier dwellers had a high level of culture. It is hoped that further discoveries will provide definite evidence that the Phoenicians came to Cornwall.

This accumulation of archaeological evidence of past culture of Cornwall is a vitally important task. Of almost equal importance is the presentation of this knowledge to the Cornish public. Various pamphlets and booklets are issued, and Cornish newspapers are always sympathetic and ready to give publicity to new discoveries. But something more is needed—something on the lines of the recent exhibition of local relics and photographs of past local life at Chacewater, referred to in the commentary of our Summer Issue. The ideal would seem to be for each Cornish town and large village to have one house or hall devoted to a visual presentation of Cornwall, past and present. Some places are fortunate in already having the facilities, notably Truro, with its Museum and Art Gallery, and now Penzance, with Penlee House, its new Municipal Arts Centre and Museum, where rooms are devoted to displays of paintings, bird exhibits, insect collections, Cornish books, archaeological exhibits, and so on. In other cases libraries are able to fulfil the need. Falmouth's Public Library has frequent special exhibitions of books, documents and photographs devoted to various aspects of Cornish life (engineering, mining, fishing, etc.), and the famous Morrab Library of Penzance, with its 32,000 books, offers visitors a rich reward. Exhibitions may also be expected from the Free Public Library at Redruth, where recent alterations, at a cost of £150, have produced what is claimed to be the finest and most up-to-date library in Cornwall.

In the entertainment world Cornwall's 1949 season has been a busy one. Repertory companies like the English Ring Actors of Penzance, the Studio Theatre of Camborne, the Contemporary Theatre of Truro, and the Avon Players of Falmouth, have been playing to large houses. A word of special praise must be given to the Avon Players, who not only play at Falmouth but take their plays on tour to Perranporth, Helston, St. Ives, St. Austell and Wadebridge. The praise is not so much for the feat of travelling, administratively difficult enough, as for providing such a high level of dramas ; to take two recent examples, Sir John Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* and J. R. Priestley's *The Linden Tree*. The English Ring Actors are another first-class company who sometimes puzzle their admirers by presenting farces and light comedies of but the slightest substance. Now that the success of the Cornish Shakespearian Festival has shown that Penzance playgoers will support the highest level of drama, let us hope that the town's resident repertory company will venture more often into the field of Shaw, Ibsen, O'Neill, Chekov, dramatists whose work is a mental tonic rather than a soporific. On the other

hand, full praise to the English Ring Actors for venturing, on one or two occasions, to present new plays by local dramatists—an excellent trend which might well be copied by the companies at Camborne, Truro and Falmouth.

Whether wrestling is entertainment or sport is not quite clear, but at all events there seems to be a welcome revival in Cornwall. An enthusiastic group at St. Kew has kept the sport alive there, and the annual tournament produced many exciting bouts, as well as the appearance of the Cornish heavy-weight champion, William Chapman of St. Wenn, member of a famous Cornish wrestling family. Wrestling tournaments have also been held at Paul and at Falmouth, where a contest organized by the Falmouth Chamber of Commerce was won by another Chapman, the Cornish middle-weight champion. Another Cornish entertainment-cum-sport took place recently at St. Columb, where a Cornish champion successfully claimed the first prize in Britain's National Town Criers' Championship. Fifteen of the country's best town criers entered, including representatives from Scotland and Wales. The winner was Ben T. Johnson, forty-one-year-old town crier of Fowey, and another Cornish town crier, Harry Sleeman of Bodmin, was second. To continue the entertainment survey, brass bands have been to the fore, one of the highlights being the Eleventh Annual Mid-Cornwall Bandsman's Festival at Stenalees, attended by a record crowd of more than three thousand. There were eighteen entries, and among prizewinners were the Bugle Silver Band, Porthleven Town Band, Truro City Band, Lostwithiel Silver Band and the St. Just Town Band. At Falmouth great success attended the Falmouth Camera Club's Fifth International Exhibition at the Polytechnic Hall, the only open international exhibition held in Cornwall, and regarded as the largest in the West of England. Out of 450 prints submitted, 160 photographs were hung, including entries from the U.S.A., Canada, Brazil, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Austria, Hungary, India and Curacao. The East Cornwall Society of Artists' Sixth Annual Exhibition at West Looe drew the largest number of entries in the Society's history, and some interesting exhibits and quite a few sales were recorded at the summer exhibitions of the Penwith Society, the St. Ives Society, Newlyn Art Gallery and the new Arras Gallery, Mousehole.

Owing to the large number of art shows held in Cornwall—there are often four or five new shows every month at St. Ives—it has become

impossible for the *Cornish Review* to report on each exhibition. (The same applies to dramatic performances, as pointed out in the last commentary.) Consequently, as from this issue, both art and theatre notes will be devoted either to critical studies of the work of particular painters and groups of painters (or theatre companies) or to announcements of forthcoming new exhibitions or performances of special note. In this issue, for example, there are reports on the Cornish Shakespearian Festival and an interesting International Youth Drama experiment at Restormel Castle, and there is a full-length study of the work of Ben Nicholson, world-famous painter who lives at Carbis Bay. There may—almost certainly will—be many Cornish readers who do not understand or like Mr. Nicholson's work, or that of his younger contemporary, David Haughton, whose picture of Zennor is reproduced in this issue. Such readers would probably, on the other hand, enjoy the more traditional paintings of John A. Park (*Cornish Review* No. 1) and of Leonard J. Fuller, whose portrait of Herbert Thomas—recently presented by Mr. Thomas for permanent exhibition at Penlee House, Penzance—is reproduced in this issue. The aim of the *Cornish Review* is to try and help readers to an appreciation of *all* artistic reflections of Cornwall and the Cornish spirit. No less a public Cornish figure than Lord St. Germans, opening the East Cornwall Society of Artists Exhibition, drew attention to the limitation of such an attitude to art as that expressed by Sir Alfred Munnings, President of the R.A., who seems to admire only paintings of photographic accuracy, and "can see no beauty in the visionary imaginations of the modern Impressionists". A local newspaper, reporting Lord St. Germans' remarks, went on to point out, almost with triumph, that, nevertheless, the East Cornwall Exhibition contained no examples of the modernist type of art. A similar attitude is noticeable in other Cornish newspapers, which delight in referring to "long-haired, besandled artists", and so on. This is, in fact, the attitude of the popular daily press—an attitude born of fear of anything that deviates from the strictly conventional, the orthodox. Such an attitude seems almost paradoxical in Cornwall, a place renowned in history for being the home of unorthodoxy, of inventions, rebellions, explorations, new religions, etc. A man's apparel has very rarely anything to do with the quality of his work. Most of the great painters and writers of the past would make very odd figures sartorially. As a matter of but minor interest, Ben Nicholson's style of dress is no more—perhaps less—unorthodox than that of Sir Alfred Munnings. As a matter of major interest, Mr. Nicholson has attained as much critical acknowledgment in the world of art as Sir Alfred

Munnings. The difference between them is that they represent two quite opposite approaches to art. If we admit, and it would be impertinent not to, that both are equally sincere in their creative work, then the only logical next step is to try and understand what *both* are getting at.

Such, at any rate, is the policy of the *Cornish Review*, not only in regard to art in Cornwall but in regard to literature, music, drama and every other field of human endeavour. In previous issues, for instance, the literary space has been given to studies of Charles Lee and "Q", two eminent exponents of a Cornish literature. In this issue, as a contrast, appear two short studies of the effect of Cornwall upon D. H. Lawrence, who lived here for several years during the First Great War. Lawrence was not Cornish, and his views on the Cornish varied from time to time, but—like W. H. Hudson, another writer whose visit to Zennor is commemorated in this issue—he was very much affected by the Cornish atmosphere and background. In a future issue it is hoped to publish an article showing how Cornwall affected another great non-Cornish writer, Thomas Hardy. At the same time there will also be full-length studies of Crosbie Garstin, J. C. Tregarthern and other Cornish writers. Only in this way of approach to Cornwall and its culture—that is to say, viewed both from within and from without—is it possible to reach a true and faithful interpretation.

THE EDITOR.

#### A SUGGESTION FOR CHRISTMAS

*It will soon be time to buy Christmas presents. In Cornwall, as everywhere, there must be many people who have difficulty in choosing the right sort of present. Fortunately, in Cornwall, there is now a solution to the age-old problem—an annual subscription to the Cornish Review. If you have friends or relatives, at home or away, whom you wish to remember at Christmas—please do fill in their names and addresses on the form on page 109 and send with cheque to this office (if more than one subscription, write names and addresses on a piece of paper). A letter announcing the gift will be sent at Christmas-time, and the subscription will begin with the New Year issue, out on January 1, 1950.*

# GRANITE

M. E. BORG-BANKS

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THE area that roughly conforms to West Penwith happens also to be that area of West Cornwall where the rock formation is granite.

Cornish granite being perhaps the soundest and most delightful of all rocks on which to climb, Jimmy and I were confining our activities to this area. My companion was one of those original Commando N.C.O.s who, having become inured to danger in the early swashbuckling cross-Channel raids, survived the war by a combination of sheer good luck and virtuosity with a tommy-gun. He took to climbing as a duck takes to water. To him the thrills and dangers of mountaineering in some measure counterbalanced the disillusion of peace. Small of stature, incapable of pessimism, and imperturbable at all times, he made an ideal climbing colleague.

Because the tide was low we were able to get right down to the very bottom of the climb at the base of the cliffs. Although the surface of the sea was smooth on this sunny, windless day, great long oily rollers were sweeping in. They pounded themselves into surf on the sands by Logan Rock and thundered against the outcrop of rocks on which we were standing. The granite that we were to climb rose sheer above for some two hundred and fifty feet before its tooth-like summit made a cruel silhouette against a metallic sky. We uncoiled our nylon climbing rope, and each taking an end tied a bowline around our waist. I was all too well aware that this climb was of a "severe" standard, and would tax both nerve and strength before the top were attained.

As I approached the first pitch of the climb I felt again that cold pang that I have come to know so well, almost to expect, at this stage. In the presence of such an ageless and immutable massif I experience a deep feeling of inferiority and impotence, as if it were an impertinence to sully

those dignified granite walls with climbing boots and festoon them with ropes. But the feeling is transient in the face of the reality of the rock. The eyes and spirit were torn down from the soaring heights to the very material problem of negotiating the first pitch. This was in the form of a crack in the cliff wall sufficiently wide to admit a man's body, and is described in mountaineering jargon as a chimney. I squeezed into this tomblike cavity, made chilly by the morning tide. The granite here was washed hard and smooth by the ceaseless action of the sea, and consequently presented an utter lack of holds. It was a worthy start to a worthy climb, and had to be ascended in the manner traditional to chimneys. A concerted heave, groan, grab and grunt gains a few precious inches, which must at all costs be retained by jamming the knees or elbows until another effort carries the climber up yet a few inches more. I painfully ascended the cold clammy walls until, panting and weary, I emerged on to a sunny ledge some fifty feet up. Here I tied myself to the rock and took in the rope as Jimmy climbed. No attempt was made to pull him up, the rope being merely a precaution so that in the event of a vital handhold breaking or his loss of balance, he would have come to no worse a fate than dangling on the end of the rope like a hooked fish. It gave me a deal of smug satisfaction to see Jimmy in turn force and grapple his way up, cursing chimneys in general and reviling this one in particular with a vituperative skill perfected by twelve years of varied service.

By the time that he arrived at my ledge I had regained my breath and was thoroughly warmed by the combination of exertion and sun. All apathy and apprehension had now vanished. The granite, being well above the high-water mark, had changed from the cold, slippery texture of the chimney to that rough, fawn rock, mottled with lichen, which besides being a delight to the eye afforded a host of small but safe footholds to the jagged teeth of the tricouni climbing nails set around the edges of our climbing boots. Here the cliffs rose above, lying just a few degrees back from the vertical. A rough, broken line of weakness on the left indicated the only reasonable route. I climbed out round an awkward ascending corner which, although plentifully supplied with holds, tended to throw the climber off balance to the left. Above the cliffs rose again sheer, the holds being ample for toes and fingers. Careful movements and good technique triumphed, until once again I tied myself to the rock and let Jimmy climb. I was now striking form, and the rough granite cliff unrolled in front of me like a dappled carpet. It was the mood that makes one relish difficulties, so that the granite that looked so

forbidding from below now appeared to be smiling and encouraging me. I suddenly became conscious that the noise of the surf had mellowed and a gentle breeze was fanning my cheek. Only then was I aware that I had ascended about a hundred and fifty feet, the rollers creaming far below me. It is not uncommon for the climber, as was my experience on this occasion, to become so engrossed in the technical problems of grip and balance as to be oblivious of height.

A little way up the next pitch, just as I clambered on to a ledge, the peace was shattered by the distraught screech of a razor-bill. The reason for the bird's panic was its nest, perched on the end of the ledge and containing two beautiful white eggs. A few more feet of climbing brought me to another ledge from which the remainder of the climb could be examined in detail. It took the form of an almost vertical wall split horizontally across its middle by a narrow ledge. The face of the wall was, by comparison with the remainder of the climb, smooth, with no large foot- or hand-holds. This climb, like all thoroughbreds, was keeping its most hazardous pitches to the last. These last two were obviously the crux of the climb, the grand finale.

As I traversed out on to the face, with a sheer drop of two hundred feet below me, Jimmy gave me one of those rare, warm smiles that are so much more eloquent and encouraging than words. To a climber on form this penultimate pitch is quite delightful. The finger- and toe-holds were only just large enough to be sufficient, yet they were so spaced as to enable me to climb in perfect balance, moving from hold to hold with delicate, rhythmic and controlled movements. The ease of my progress on this airy and technically difficult face was evidence of my confidence in the efficiency of the grip of my climbing boots, confidence in Jimmy's ability to take the shock on the rope should I "peel off" and, above all, confidence in my own prowess. I gained the half-way ledge and, belaying myself to the rock, saw Jimmy safely up. He, too, had caught the spirit of the climb. With his puckish features screwed up in concentration, he climbed in grand style, his movements perfectly polished, almost casual, although his whole weight at times depended on one single tricouni nail.

Together we examined the last pitch. Half-way up the hand-holds appeared to run out completely, with the exception of a thin, vertical flake behind which the fingers might just find lodgment. Although still exhilarated by the last pitch, and comforted by the imperturbable Jimmy, I attacked this last obstacle strongly but with secret misgiving. The first six feet to a slight bulge were straightforward enough, but the moment that

I dreaded arrived all too soon when I had to forsake my good hand-holds and take the complete weight of my body on the fingertips of my right hand. I gingerly moved my right hand up to the flake and managed to force three fingertips behind it. Summoning all the self-control in my power, I relaxed the grip of my left hand and felt the dead weight of my body strain the fingers of my right hand almost to breaking point. But they held. Three or four tense movements, using minute finger-holds and foot-holds no larger than a walnut, carried me to safer rock—and the summit. It was then that I felt that tremendous wave of exhilaration and triumph that follows moments of great mental strain and physical effort. It is a rare and indescribable experience, but to me, anyhow, justifies the risk of the climb. It is the reward of the ascetic.

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## Ode in Accusation

WAS it on some calm night of moonlessness or moon  
     That first the sense of beauty came to him ?  
 Or in the large, wild fragrance of the primitive noon  
     When distances with opal haze were dim ?  
         Or was it in a dream  
         When sleep was gracious over breast and limb  
             He first beheld the Gleam ?  
  
 Or was it when some tyrant wind bowed down the trees  
     And roared into the fastness of his cave  
 That the great rhythm plucked echoes from his broken ease  
     And its own secret to his keeping gave—  
         Till in an ecstasy  
 He roared against that roaring and grew brave  
     Where all the tribe would flee ?  
  
 What instinct bade him voice his visions when the throng  
     Of all men else but spoke in current need ?  
 What impulse changed the human cry into a song  
     Until to sing grew brother to a deed ?  
         Why was there ever born  
         On Earth the poet to scatter fiery seed  
             And be the strong man's scorn ?  
  
 The mystery of his function lies in his desire  
     To voice the likeness that himself has seen  
 Between the fire's reflection and the very fire ;  
     To shape again the beauty that has been  
         An overwhelming sight,  
         And by expression make its symbol mean  
             The primal pulse of Might.  
  
 Glint and foreglimmer of that function fed his powers  
     With magic trances only he could know  
 In that first stir at heart when trees and stars and flowers  
     Called forth from Man the strange and inner glow  
         That never any beast  
         Of field or wild has felt at the ancient show  
             In fire-winged west or east !—

For poetry was the first fine vesture donned by Man  
 When aspiration, dumb and blind, at last  
 Saw, and demanded voice ! So, like a lonely clan  
 Amid the rougher surge of men, and vast  
 Grim circumstance, there came  
 The poets to the world, and truth was cast  
 As in new moulds of flame.

But oh, how often have these sacred moulds been dashed  
 To earth by Man, to lie there, scorned and rent !  
 How often have the terrible and the lovely clashed,  
 And Beauty's purpose seemingly been spent !  
 Now once again the Muse  
 Must, as in some prophetic parliament,  
 Rise up, and cry "*I accuse !*

*I accuse mankind of failing its ascent from slime  
 Through cowardice before the brute and knave ;*  
*I accuse the world of wasting Time's own gift of time ;*  
*I accuse the soul of digging its own grave !*  
*I accuse Man in his herd  
 Of casting out the beauty that would save !”*  
 O Muse ! O blazing Word !

WALLACE NICHOLS.

## Hudson Memorial<sup>1</sup>

UP on this moor above the Zennor road  
 I, as you once were, a stranger trod,  
 Casting about among the granite boulders,  
 Haunted by your lean limbs, the caped shoulders,  
 The birdlike eyes through which we saw so much,  
 As we see more stirred by a poet's touch,  
 Came to the smooth rock cliff that suddenly rose  
 Out of a whipping sea of thorn and furze  
 Where simple words as simply carved on stone  
 Perpetuate your rich communion  
 With all the moods that change this vast expanse  
 And give expression to its permanence.

W. J. STRACHAN.

<sup>1</sup> "W. H. Hudson often came here" is inscribed on a rock on Zennor Moor.

## The Sea-Wraith

IN the roaring twilight of Polperro  
A pacing woman called to me ;  
Her hair was black as its moonlit caves,  
Her eyes were full of the harrowing sea.

The scowling light was near to night,  
Her garments cracked in the wind like whips ;  
Cold terror swilled through my innermost heart,  
Colder than sealight in eclipse.

I bent like a reed with her and the gale.  
“ Let go,” I said. “ But no,” she said,  
“ When boats and men are lost at sea.  
We have this way to claim our dead.

“ They always answer, they cannot deceive.  
No howl of gale or sea-fowl shriek,  
No yeasty moil or cluck of rocks  
Can drown the final words they speak.

Then hope and loss are reconciled ;  
Suspense is ended, though love’s not over——”  
“ Let go,” I cried. “ You have called the wrong :  
I am a breathing, living lover.”

A maniac laughter shook the dusk,  
A wilder wailing outshrilled the sea :  
“ Not Death himself shall end our love  
And make you not remember me.”

A long wave burst with a doomsday crack  
And a sudden darkness filled my head :  
I weltered on tumultuous tides,  
And then I knew that I was dead. . . .

Now nightly I climb the stair of stone  
To the little town from the slaty shore ;  
But all is dead as a midnight cave  
Except for its gullies' funnelled roar,

Except for the shutter-chinks of light  
That are blown on the dark in flying fits  
And tantalize like broken dreams  
My hungering heart, my scattered wits.

Where is the house, the woman I loved  
In the happiest haven I ever found ?  
I cannot forget or quite remember,  
But joys was ours, and joy is drowned.

GEOFFREY JOHNSON.

## The Coast

THERE is no shore, only  
planes stark and sheer sliding  
one upon another, thrusting  
out of the sea-bed to high-flung  
seagulls—chips of cloud spumed  
from the hammer-blows of the sun.

Dark upon dark rising  
from a cauldron of white anger,  
light upon dark where the face  
of the sky slants to a surface  
washing and running and filling gaps,  
pouring through the distended  
wings of a motionless cormorant.

Mass, colour, movement, sound :  
black static rock pyramidal  
organ-like, a hollow swelling  
of sound made by surf-laced fingers  
running over the hidden manuals.  
The sea heaving over rock submerged  
under timeless green, the sea  
flinging into caves and crannies  
dried in the wind and sun, made moist  
and moving by the intermittent sea ;  
the sea falling short of towering  
inaccessible rock bleached in the wind  
and sun and chalked by the droppings  
of unnumbered seabirds.

The sea-shuttle, the changeless  
rhythm ; the sliding backward  
and the leaping forward, the progenitor  
of land-life : from the rhythm  
of ebb and flow emerged life.

Refraction of light molten  
in the sea reflected on rock ;  
heave of the sea holding  
the spectrum, the crock of gold  
tangled in bedridden seaweed :  
Bar gold striking up and striking  
down, splitting upon black rock,  
cracking the walls of rotted timber—  
a rainbow from here to there  
compassing the sea-suffusing earth.

The deep sea green of all colour  
of the living and the dead : deep  
to death to living : the movement  
of colour alive and putrescent,  
rose of the alive shape  
salmon of the maggot. Deep green  
sea embodying the alive and unalive :

the eternal all : the deep womb  
forming fish and plant, reptile and mammal :  
the deep green deep of fathomless  
creation : the movement along the sand,  
the grasping claw, the waving algae :  
the green gloom enfolding  
the eternal moment, the beginning  
and the end is the middle of this moment  
of green sea with the sun upon it.

The movement of a wing  
the movement of my finger, the break  
of a wave is the lift  
of my arm ; the green of the deep  
hollow is the rose of my alive limbs  
and the wind is the beat of my blood.  
The iris of a bird is the iris  
Of the sun ; the axis of the earth  
is the core of the sea ;  
the atom of the sandgrain  
is the smile upon my lips.

Sunsight and seashape and here  
in the unmoving moment myself  
clothed in a particle of thought,  
the time of reason and progress  
and the harnessed atom: Here  
for a moment I am of this shape  
and of this thought, the next  
to be dispersed upon the wind  
under the sun upon the rock :  
a dancing speck of dust in the play  
of light upon a pool ; a wisp of seafoam  
flecked on the wing of a seabird ;  
a trickle of iron in the towering rock.

REX MILES.

# THE CHOUGH AND THE ERMIN

HELENA CHARLES

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ONCE as a child I stood in Coinagehall Street, Helston, at Plum Fair. The streets were thronged with people. Suddenly I felt completely at one with the crowd, and into my mind came the words "These are *my* people". Only on one other occasion have I had a similar experience, in Tréguier Market a year ago.

Cornish and Bretons are one people, separated only by the accident of history. The present population of Brittany is largely the result of the Saxon invasions of Britain of the fifth to seventh centuries. As the invaders made life increasingly intolerable for the Britons of Dumnonia (Cornwall and Devon), a mass emigration began to the Armorican Peninsula, which was then inhabited by Romanized Celts speaking a Latin dialect. So radically did the immigrants affect the population, that the north coast of Armorica became known as Dumnonia, and the language changed from Latin to the Celtic of the newcomers, who, in fact, gave the name Brittany to the whole peninsula, and the name Cornwall (Kerne) to a district in the south. We can only guess at the personal tragedies that occasioned and accompanied this movement. But we can trace with some accuracy the places of origin and destination of the colonists. "Tréguier" [Lantreger], says Canon Doble, "must have been founded by colonists from Tricuria [Treger-Sir], the hundred of Trigg. The Parish of Landewednack at the Lizard is opposite Landevennec, and one could quote hundreds of names common to both countries."

Some of the colonists were Christians. But they were without priests, and completely disorganized and bewildered. Into this confusion came the saints, who were evidently organizers of great ability, who left such a mark on the villages which they founded and which bear their names, that they have been canonized, not by Rome, but by popular acclamation.

To this day they exercise a profound influence on the people of Brittany. Most of them have their proper offices, in the Diocese of Brittany and Cornwall alone. Large numbers of parishes in Cornwall are called after the same saints. In the Newquay district, for instance, there are thirteen parishes dedicated to saints who are also honoured in Brittany. Many of the saints were hermits. But they did not always work alone. Sometimes they travelled from country to country with a saintly companion. In Wales, Cornwall and Brittany there are dedications in adjacent areas to St. David and St. Nonna. In Cornwall, Davidstow is a few miles from Altarnon (Altar Nonna). In Brittany, St. Divy is not far from Dirinon. At Dirinon are two fountains dedicated to St. Nonna and St. David, and a chapel of St. David.

Tugdual, founder of Tréguier, was a Dumnonian. But most of these travelling saints come from Wales, some via Wales from Ireland. Across the Bristol Channel they sailed to Padstow, thence overland to Fowey and so to Brittany. But the travellers who sailed from Fowey were not all saints. The road to the sea was guarded at Castle Dore by the chieftain, Mark Cunmor, the sea dog (Cunomorus he is called in the Breton life of St. Pol de Leon), husband of Iseult and father, not uncle, of Tristan, Tristan who first saw Iseult in Cornwall and died for love of her, we are told, in Brittany some time during the sixth century. Apparently they brought him home for burial, for the tombstone of Tristan, son of Cunomorus, has been found near Castle Dore.

Until the end of the Middle Ages there was constant coming and going between the two countries. Bretons accompanied William the Conqueror, and were welcomed by the Cornish as allies against the Saxons. They received grants of land in Cornwall from William. Such is the origin of the Boterels, the St. Aubyns, and the Tanguys, to mention only three Cornish families. Brittany began to send clergy to Cornwall. It was a Breton priest, Martin of Bodmin, who in 1177 stole the body of St. Petroc and took it to St. Méen. In 1504 the play *Bewnans Meriasek, Bishop of Vannes* was written in Cornish. In 1695 Edmund Gibson ascribed the decay of Cornish to the cessation of intercourse between Cornwall and Brittany after the reign of Henry VIII, but some contact was kept up throughout the sixteenth century. In 1537 an unwise Protestant Customs official lived to rue the day when he tried to interfere with a party of Cornish and Bretons who were setting out with their priest to go on a pilgrimage from Truro to Tréguier. A Breton priest took part in the Prayer Book Rebellion of 1549. The subsidy rolls, and marriage and burial

registers, show that there was a considerable Breton population in Cornwall at this time. They were mostly servants and labourers who had come over on account of the higher wages. After the outbreak of Henry VIII's French wars, the number declined, and it is probable that many of them became naturalized. At this time the surname Briton becomes common.<sup>1</sup>

When other contact ceased Breton fishermen continued to come and to trade salt for skate. They maintained a house in St. Ives till the seventeenth century. Canon Doble's father knew a Cornish fisherman who knew enough Cornish to talk to the Breton fishermen. During the 1939-45 war a number of Breton fisher families lived in Newlyn. To-day they, and the onion men, are familiar sights.

Apart from the fishermen, there was little intercourse, though till the nineteenth century there were Cornish scholars in the school at St. Pol de Leon. It was not till our own century that the relationship was re-established. In 1904 Henry Jenner made the first speech in Cornish for a hundred years, when Cornwall was admitted a member of the Celtic Congress at Lesneven in Brittany. On a purely peasant level, a young man, Noel Tyacke, paid yearly visits to Brittany till 1914, attracted less by the demands of scholarship than by a feeling of affinity with the Bretons, with whom he delighted to exchange a few words in Breton supplemented by Cornish. After the war, which Noel Tyacke did not survive, Canon Doble began his researches and the number of contacts grew. The Kelgh Keltek (Celtic correspondence circle) started in Cornwall and now includes members of all six Celtic countries. Cornish-Breton wrestling is keeping alive a thousand-year-old tradition. The Friends of Brittany raised funds to help Breton sufferers during the 1939 war and victims of French persecution after the war. A Cornish representative last year signed the Celtic petition, urging the French Government to lift the ban on teaching Breton in schools. Because the Secretary of the Congress of European Communities and Regions is a Breton, Cornwall is represented on the Permanent Committee of the Congress, along with Wales and Scotland. Perhaps most significant of all is the warm welcome which any Cornish person receives in Brittany. "You are not a foreigner here," I was told at a Breton summer school last year, and at Easter in Paris I was addressed in Cornish by a young Breton, one of several who have learnt our language. Two recent attractive suggestions have been made, one that Armorican and Insular Cornwall should adopt each other and exchange official and unofficial visits, the

<sup>1</sup> A. L. Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall*.

other that the parishes in both countries with the same dedication should be in contact with each other. A complete list of these parishes is available. I have said nothing about the cultural affinities between the two peoples. Cornwall, unfortunately, has nothing to compare with the amazing richness and diversity of Breton costumes and dances. Nor do there appear to be songs common to both peoples. "Bro Coth agan Tasow" was translated from Welsh to Breton and from Breton to Cornish in modern times. How much music and dancing was lost during the Wesleyan movement we do not know. There is a Breton version of the Dilly Carol, but this appears in most European languages, and there is even a Hebrew variant. There is, however, one striking similarity, that between the one surviving Cornish dance, the Helston Furry, and a number of Breton dances. The arrangement is typically Celtic, Strathspey time, sixteen "promenade" beats, followed by thirty-two beats for figures. The "Bale Daon" and "Bale Pevar" of Armorican Cornwall have a quite extraordinary resemblance to the Furry, which makes me convinced that in remote times they were the same dance. At Guingamp there is an even more striking resemblance. The Helston Furry is danced through the streets on the eighth of May in honour of St. Michael. At Guingamp the "Dérobée" is danced through the streets on the eighth of September, in honour of St. Louvard, both dances consist of the 16-32 formation.

To quote Canon Doble again : "The Bretons and the Cornish are the same Celtic race. Both have been subjugated by a neighbouring nation more numerous, possessing a different culture, speaking a different language. The differences that now exist between the Bretons and the Cornish arise solely from the different histories of the two nations that have annexed them."

Breton reaction to French persecution and repression has been a vigorous revival of Breton culture, and large numbers of French-speaking Bretons have learnt their language. Unless Cornish people react with equal vigour to the process of assimilation to England that is taking place, we shall become just another English county, and it will be left to our daughter nation to safeguard our Celtic heritage, which we are rapidly betraying.

# THE ROMANCE OF Porthcurno CABLE STATION

SIR STANLEY ANGWIN

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**N**OWHERE is the remote past of Cornwall so intermixed with its future as in the ancient parish of St. Levan, wherein lies Porthcurno, "the Bay of Cornishmen". There, it is said, the Phoenicians landed more than two thousand years ago to trade their wares. There, some fourteen hundred years ago, dwelt the holy man St. Selevan, who gave his name and a wealth of traditional stories to the locality. We like to imagine him living a simple life of self-denial amid the passionate violence of his fellow Celts, preserving light and learning where it had almost perished ; keeping alive the national aspirations of his race, and teaching them the blessings of peace.

For more than a thousand years Porthcurno remained much as it was in his days. Then, on a day in the mid-nineteenth century, a ship, the *Brisk*, anchored fifteen miles out and ran an electric cable ashore to the beach. Homeward-bound merchantmen reported their safe arrival in the Channel approaches and the nature of their cargoes to her. Little is known of this venture, save that it superseded for a time the reporting in Falmouth Roads. In 1870—four years after the laying of the first successful transatlantic cable—the Falmouth, Gibraltar and Malta Telegraph Company landed at Porthcurno the shore end of a cable which ran to Carcavelos, near Lisbon, and built a cable station. This Company worked in conjunction with others formed about that time whose cables carried the messages from Gibraltar to Suez, Bombay, Australia and China. In 1872 and the following year these companies were re-formed into the Eastern Telegraph Company and the Eastern Extension, Australasia and China Telegraph Company. Thus came to Porthcurno the Eastern Company, destined to give it new life and

industry, and to carry its fame across the world as PK, the centre of the British Commonwealth's submarine cable network.

Ten cables now belonging to Cable and Wireless have been landed on Porthcurno beach since the first in 1870. They came in this order—a cable to Vigo, Spain, in 1873 ; a cable to Harbour Grace, Newfoundland, in 1874 ; the first of two cables to Bilbao, Spain, in 1884 ; a second cable to Carcavelos in 1887 ; the first of two cables direct to Gibraltar in 1898, and the first of two to Fayal, Azores, in 1900 ; a cable to Madeira in 1901 ; the second Fayal cable in 1906 ; the second direct to Gibraltar in 1919 ; and the second Bilbao cable in 1925. In addition, there are two French cables and a Post Office cable to the Scillies, all of which are operated by the cable station. The cables run out fanwise from Porthcurno into the broad Atlantic. With their extensions they girdle the earth, and make up a network of 155,000 nautical miles.

In the early days a message was sent from one end to the other of each of the cables along its route. It was written down at the receiving end and then re-transmitted by hand into the next cable. Porthcurno was connected by landlines with a central telegraph station in the City of London, and was thus the first relay station for outward and the last for homeward messages.

The method of sending a message over a cable from Porthcurno in 1870 was for the operator to use a pair of keys. The left-hand key was depressed to send a dot and the right-hand key to send a dash. We now transmit automatically and receive by an instrument known as the "direct printer", which translates the incoming signals into the characters of the Roman alphabet, which it prints on a moving strip of paper. Meantime, another development had changed the character of Porthcurno as a cable station. Means had been found of relaying messages from cable to cable automatically, so that receiving and re-transmitting at each cable junction could be avoided. It thus became possible to link the cables together in chains.

From 1870 to 1914 the submarine cable remained unchallenged as the fastest, most reliable and most economic method of overseas telegraphy. But a potential rival had been developing since 1901, when Marconi established wireless communications between Poldhu—close by Porthcurno—and St. John's, Newfoundland. Six years later a commercial wireless service, the first of many, was opened between Ireland and Canada. During the First World War wireless was rapidly developed as a means of communication. In 1926 the short-wave beam wireless system was introduced for commercial purposes.

By 1928 certain of the British Post Office's beam wireless services had come into direct competition with the cable services of the Pacific Cable Board, an enterprise owned jointly by the Governments of the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia. An Imperial Wireless and Cable Conference was accordingly held in London that year to examine the position and recommend a common policy for the Empire Governments. The Conference recommended an amalgamation of all cable and wireless interests conducting communications between the various parts of the Empire. All these interests were accordingly merged in 1929 in the Company now known as Cable & Wireless Ltd., to which Porthcurno cable station to-day belongs. The possibility of damaging competition between the cable and wireless systems of overseas communications was thus brought to an end. Simultaneously there began a new policy of integration of the two systems in such a way as to give the Empire one system of overseas telegraphy, combining the advantages of both. Whereas before 1929 Porthcurno was an important station in a cable network, it then became a no less important link in a unique system of world-wide integrated cable and wireless circuits. The extent of its contribution may be judged from the fact that it is capable of handling 2,160,000 words in a day.

These cables, which issue from Porthcurno and carry men's thoughts through the dark stillness of so many tens of thousands of miles of ocean bed, consist of a core of copper wire set in guttapercha insulator. Woven round the guttapercha is a sheathing of steel wires. The sheathing used for cable lying on the ocean bed, where there is no movement from tides is light. A section of this deep-sea cable does not exceed an inch in diameter. But greater protection has to be given to cable laid inshore. The diameter of a section of this "shore-end" cable may be as much as three inches.

When one of the Porthcurno cables develops a fault, arrangements are at once made in the London Telegraph Station and the station at the other end of the cable to divert the traffic over one or more alternative cable routes, or on to a wireless circuit. Meantime, an engineer at Porthcurno, measures the electrical resistance of the cable between Porthcurno and the point at which the fault has developed. The cable has a known resistance per nautical mile, and the distance of the fault along it can therefore be calculated. The Engineer-in-Chief in London orders the operation of the fleet of cable ships, which now numbers eleven. He has the fleet disposed throughout the world at strategic centres. On hearing from Porthcurno the position of the fault, he orders the nearest

ship to do the repair. The ship steams to the position given her and marks the spot with a buoy. She then lowers a grapnel and traverses the line of the cable until the grapnel hooks it. The cable is raised to the surface, taken aboard and cut. One end is put back in the sea with a buoy attached, while electrical tests are made with the other. The faulty section is cut out and a new section inserted if necessary. The two ends are again brought aboard and joined, and the cable is restored to the sea-bed.

Because of its security the cable system was of great strategic significance in the war. It was on that account deemed necessary in 1940 to transfer the cable station from the station house in the shadow of Pednmere—the cliff guarding the eastern end of Porthcurno Bay—to a tunnel in the rocky fastness of its interior. Within a few months the old cable station was evacuated. Forty-eight hours later enemy bombs fell four hundred yards away. While at work in the tunnel, the staff lived in a secure world of their own. But outside there was much to remind them of the war. Commandos trained in the neighbourhood ; convoys were bombed within sight of land ; E boats came close inshore. Once it was said that a spy had been captured ; but he proved to be a fugitive from Penzance Asylum.

Instructions had been given to the Manager, the late Mr. W. F. A. Bell, to destroy the installation in the event of invasion. Mr. Bell has related that one day he received a warning that invasion was imminent. He sat up all night by a telephone with a massive axe at hand, so as to lose no time should word come from the local Army Commander to destroy his station. But the storm of war passed and in due course the cable station, with its stores and equipment, has begun to move back to its old home above ground.

As you walk along the road to Porthcurno, with Penzance at your back, and begin the steep descent to the beach, you pass on your left a row of houses. These are the houses of the cable station staff. Then, on your right, with the beach and the sea coming into view, you pass the Old School, now a rather desolate building with only a few rooms occupied. This building, from 1870 until 1919, was the training school of the pioneer cable companies. Successive generations of cablemen were trained there in the rudiments of operating. Thence they went out to man the overseas stations. No less important than the technical training they received was the discipline. As early as 1872 Sir James Anderson, first Managing Director of the Eastern Telegraph Company, forcefully expressed his concern with discipline and manly behaviour in a letter which he wrote

to the Manager at Porthcurno. The purport of the letter was that it had come to Sir James's knowledge that, on three occasions in two months, some of the young gentlemen at Porthcurno had been "conspicuous for the use of strong language and drinking".

"I distinctly insist", he wrote, "that the Superintendents and Clerks in charge shall be responsible for keeping me informed of the moral deportment of the clerks as well as of their professional ability, and I beg those who are not willing to make up their minds to do the service credit by their conduct to resign at once".

Among the cablemen who have served as Managers at Porthcurno are many who have earned a place among the great names of West Cornwall. I will mention only Mr. Bull, the first Manager ; Mr. Ash, the second ; whose term of office extended from 1876 to 1912 ; and Mr. J. G. Marsden, Manager from 1912 to 1921, and a founder member of the Royal Archaeological Society. Mr. Marsden's collection of flint implements mostly found in the Porthcurno district, put him among the foremost authorities of his day on the subject. His most spectacular finds were the flint "workshops" on Pednmere and Carn-aul.

The graduates of Porthcurno were put to a severe test in those months immediately following the Pearl Harbour outrage, in which the Japanese forces swept through the Far East. Along the whole line of cable stations on the coasts of China, in Hong Kong, in Indo-China, the East Indies and Malaya the staffs remained on duty until the last.

It was a sad moment in 1919 when it became necessary to move the School to London ; but arrangements are now being made to reopen it at Porthcurno. The new school will not give a course in telegraph operating only but a full course in telecommunications engineering, and will inherit and carry into the future the traditions established by the old school.

The cable as a means of long-distance communication is about to undergo big development. This arises partly from the limitations of wireless and partly from technical progress. As the uses of wireless increase in number the overcrowding of the limited waveband, within which all wireless signals must be carried, increases correspondingly. The time is approaching when it may be necessary to exclude from the ether services capable of being conducted by other means. Radio-direction-finding, ship-to-shore and air-to-ground wireless have an irresistible claim to the ether. So has broadcasting. But long-distance telegraphy could be conducted by cable. It may be that the tendency will be to put an increasing proportion of international telegraph traffic into the cables.

The technical progress to which reference is made is an advance in the technique of cable construction and the development of the submarine telegraph repeater. The development of a satisfactory deep-sea repeater capable of withstanding the high pressures of great depths of water for long periods is now proceeding. The long-distance submarine cables now in use permit two or four channels of communication to be used simultaneously. By using the most modern type of cable, augmented by submarine repeaters, we believe that it may be possible to obtain upwards of fifty simultaneous channels of communication on one cable. It will, moreover, be possible to use some of these channels for telephony and picture telegraphy which can to-day only be accomplished over long distances by wireless.

And so, although it is seventy-eight years since the first cable was landed on the beach at Porthcurno, it remains to-day, as it was then, in the van of progress towards ever more rapid and efficient means of communication between man and man. I wish one could forecast as bright a prospect in this troubled world for those precepts of godly forbearance and learning which the saintly Selevan used to enjoin in his day. For then that great instrument the international telecommunications system, in the annals of which Porthcurno is so honoured a name, might be put to a worthier use.

# CORNWALL'S AMATEUR POETS

JOHN PENWITH

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QUEEN VICTORIA'S reign was the great age of the amateur in poetry. While Tennyson sat enthroned, all over the country parsons and postmen and the literary daughters of small-town ironmongers were doing their bit for the Muse. Poetry had become respectable. When one could speak in the same breath of the Queen, the Archbishop and the Laureate it was natural that a great many people should feel an urge to write verse ; and so the country vicar laboured, between sermons, at his immense epic on the Druids while down in the Square the village blacksmith prepared his surprise for Mr. Longfellow—it would be called either *Songs from the Smithy* or *Sparks from an Anvil*.

To this inspiration the Cornish responded as eagerly, if not so brilliantly, as they had to the Industrial Revolution which they helped to create. Nearly all the Cornish verse of the nineteenth century emanated from persons whose main occupations were unliterary, the two great exceptions being Arthur Symons and "Q". Of the thirty-seven poets or versifiers represented in Herbert Thomas's anthology of 1892, the only professional writers were Quiller-Couch, E. L. T. Harris-Bickford, H. D. Lowry and Mr. Thomas himself, with perhaps Miss M. A. Courtney and one or two others occupying an in-between position. It was very much the age of the Little Man as well as of the giants.

From 1853 to 1884 the title of Cornish Laureate belonged to a miner. John Harris was born at Camborne in 1820, left school at nine, and after working in the fields and as assistant at threepence a day to an old tinsmelter, followed his father down into Dolcoath, where for over twenty years he laboured, as he afterwards wrote, "from morning to night and often from night till morning, frequently in sulphur and dust almost to suffocation". At thirty-three, encouraged by Camborne's Dr. George Smith, he collected the verses which he had been writing and had them

published. His book rescued him from Dolcoath and promoted him to the comfort of scripture reader or missionary at Falmouth, and to some fame as the Miner Poet of Cornwall. Altogether he wrote seventeen volumes. "Your poems", Longfellow assured him in a letter, "are hailed with universal applause."

It is difficult to understand how they could be applauded except as the work of a man from whom only a small degree of literacy would be expected. His ode on the tercentenary of Shakespeare's birth, which won him the first prize of a gold watch in an Anglo-American competition, merely leaves us wondering what the other entries were like :

England will ever be,  
Dear Shakespeare, proud of thee.

In this ode the sunset light is ruddy, lambs press their daisy bed, the lark is above, and twilight lingers dim. Every adjective in Harris's verse comes from the stock vocabulary of the poetaster, every sentiment from the approved list of poetic Great Thoughts. Like all versifiers of the kind, poor John was inspired not so much by the inevitable skylark as by the stuffed owl.

Nonetheless, we cannot entirely lack respect for a man who turns out seventeen volumes ; and John Harris, we must remember, lived in days when it was an achievement for an ordinary miner to write even a letter. Unfortunately, our picture of him, which might have been an endearing one, is spoilt by the self-portrait which he left us. When one of your most famous contemporaries assures you of the world's applause, when the Rev. G. Collins knocks on your door to ask, "Does the young Milton live here ?" and then cries over one of your poems (after eating fried onions with a spoon), you are entitled to feel pleased—but not, surely, to write of yourself, with the greatest reverence, as a Heaven-sent genius. That is what Harris did in his autobiography ; and, not content with being Heaven-sent, he had to be Heaven-protected as well. Time and again, he tells us, Divine Providence miraculously interposed to save him from death or injury in Dolcoath in order—we are led to infer—that he might produce more great poems. It is perhaps regrettable that our own opinion of his work should differ from that of Divine Providence.

James Howard Harris, his eldest son, also had literary ambitions, and took to prose and verse in the intervals from teaching the board-school children at Porthleven. He produced a memoir of his father, contributed to the *Review of Reviews*, and was joint author of a book of Porthleven sketches. In verse he quite equalled the famous John :

A wanderer comes in summer time  
From distant London's din,  
To visit haunts of boyhood days,—  
The land of "Fish and Tin".

Similarly, John Alfred, James Howard's brother, inherited the family gifts. As a wood-engraver he illustrated some of his father's books, and as a poet he penned him a pious farewell :

Thy chair is vacant by our lonely hearth ;  
Thy staff at rest behind the study door ;  
Thy quill and ink are on the mantel-shelf ;  
But now thy earthly days are o'er.

Apparently he recovered from the spinal trouble which compelled him to work on his back, for Herbert Thomas says that he went to America. He died in 1892 and was buried in his father's grave at Treslothan.

So much for the Harris family. The other amateur poets of Cornwall wrote much the same kind of verse, obviously inspired by Longfellow, who made poetry appear an easy business of expressing a beautiful thought in words that scanned and rhymed. Longfellow was, indeed, ideally the poet to inspire our Martin Toppers and Eliza Cooks, and no one brave enough to spend an evening with the Household Edition of his works should be surprised by the story that Eliza, author of *The Old Armchair* ("Would ye learn the spell—a mother sat there"), should in return have inspired him. We can easily understand how a cobbler or lawyer, after reading *The Village Blacksmith*, by no means the worst of Henry Wadsworth's poems, would have felt that if this were great poetry—as everyone believed it was—he had better sit down at once and write some great poetry himself.

Not all the amateur poets of Cornwall received the papal blessing from Battle Street, Cambridge, Mass. ; and none of them achieved the celebrity of John Harris. At least one—the miner John Pascoe—fell upon evil days and died soon after being rescued from Truro Workhouse.

Among the others who followed unpoetic trades were William Dale, the Helston draper, who was also a magistrate and alderman ; Richard Burrow, the Truro bookseller ; Sam Richards, the Gwennap miner ; Richard Hambly, the Hayle accountant ; William Cock, the Tuckingmill draughtsman, who had spent a short time underground ; W. F. Woodfield, the Penzance serpentine worker, who emigrated to Australia ; J. F. Tiddy, the Gwinear commission agent ; and J. Jenkin, the Redruth stationer. W. Ambrose Taylor (Clerk to Madron Local Board and Assistant Curator of the Royal Geological Society of Cornwall), Thomas

Cornish (lawyer and President of Penzance Antiquarian Society) and Henry Sewell Stokes (Clerk to the County Council and friend of Tennyson), belong to a different category as scholarly men in the more literate professions. It is interesting that Sewell Stokes corresponded with Longfellow and was represented in Longfellow's anthology *Poems of Places*.

Three of our amateurs were postmen : William Quintrell of Camborne, Sam J. Williams of Penzance, and James Dryden Hosken of Helston, Like Wordsworth on his wanders (as Dorothy called them), these three walked and observed and meditated. The Women's Institute delegates at Truro recently who wanted mail vans on all country rounds were innocently threatening one of the few remaining occupations naturally conducive to poetry. Still, the poet-postman seems to belong already to the past.

Happily, the best-known of the group is still with us. Not long ago I met James Dryden Hosken walking in Falmouth, a handsome figure in his old age. If his Greek dramas *Phaon* and *Sappho* and *Nimrod* are now more often found in the second-hand bookshop than on the library shelf, they well deserved the praise which they earned from such men as Gladstone and Andrew Lang, having regard to the modes of the time when they were written ; and some of his lyrics have an acceptable period charm. It is therefore tragic that his old age should not be too comfortable.

"I end my days where I began, in poverty"—surely this remark, made calmly and almost casually in a letter which he wrote to *The Listener*, should be heeded in Cornwall, and not least because the author of *Sappho* and *Phaon* forms a link with an important phase in Cornwall's emergence to cultural awareness.

Working with the Household Edition at their elbows, the amateur poets lisped in numbers, for the numbers came—the numbers and very little else—but if they seldom or ever achieved first-class poetry, or anything better than verse, they at least made others aware that poetry existed. Their influence on the rough Cornwall of their time was generally civilizing, and even at their worst they did not commit such an enormity as :

Oh ! what's the matter ? what's the matter ?  
What is't that ails young Harry Gill ?  
That evermore his teeth they chatter,  
Chatter, chatter, chatter, still !

The man who wrote that was not a postman or a self-taught miner. He was William Wordsworth.

# CORNISH CHURCHES

C. C. JAMES

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THE earliest introduction of Christianity into Britain probably came through Roman invaders during the third or fourth centuries.

Contemporary Cornish memorial stones with Latin inscriptions exist in the parishes of Madron, Fowey and St. Columb Major. At this period one may visualize the celebration of Mass in our villages by the missionary standing near a stone with a Chi-Rho monogram inscribed thereon. The Chi-Rho monogram representing the Name of Christ is of two forms, which differ slightly from each other. The first ( $\chi$ ) is the form commonest in Northern Gaul, and is of the fourth century, with examples at St. Just and Phillack. The later form of the monogram ( $\rho$ ) has the "open" Rho, characteristic of Gaul, south of the Loire, with specimens at Lanteglos and South Hill. This latter contact may be attributed to the tin trade then existing between Cornwall and France.

During the seventh and eighth centuries both Hiberno Saxon lettering and inscriptions in Ogham characters were used on the monuments. Examples may be seen at St. Kew and Minster. These inscribed stones, together with those mentioned above, are the successors of the Megalithic upright stones known as "Blind Fiddlers" and "Dancing Maidens", and are connected with funerary or religious rites. All were the fore-runners of the headstones of granite and marble now found in our churchyards, and indicate an unbroken custom for four thousand years of thus commemorating the dead.

After the departure of the Roman invaders conquests in southern England by the Saxons drove the Celts into the western parts of the island. One result was to unite Wales, Cornwall, Ireland and Brittany in the bonds of closest union. Legendary lives of saints from all four show the connection. The nationality of saints corresponds roughly to coasts to

which they came. To the Land's End district and as far north as Perranzabuloe came Irish saints from Munster. Breton saints reached the south coast and, generally speaking, Welsh saints settled in the rest of the county. It is doubtful if the majority were ever entitled to the synonym "saint", a title given them by Roman ecclesiastics of the Middle Ages who did not understand the Celtic system, and confused our Celtic saints with others whose names appear in their own calendar. It is said that when a man desired to found a church, he fasted on the site for forty days and the church came to bear his name and the land was granted to him.

The seventh and eighth centuries have been called the Golden Age of the Celtic Church in Cornwall. During this period, and perhaps a century before, the first churches were built of wood or rough stone, which eventually were pulled down to make room for the substantial Norman church. Of the earlier stone buildings the little oratory of St. Piran at Perranzabuloe affords one of the rare examples of what all our pre-conquest churches must have been. At Gwithian an interesting oratory of this period lies beneath the sand. The founders of both were of Irish origin.

In 930 Athelstan completed the political and religious conquest of Cornwall. He found the monasteries at St. Germans and Bodmin in a flourishing condition, and speedily reconstituted both these great houses on Anglo-Saxon lines. The Saxon architects showed an imperfect knowledge of stone construction. Rough rubble walls were commonly used. There were no buttresses; small semicircular or triangular arches were prevalent, also square towers. Pre-Norman masonry may still exist in the west wall of St. Germans, and many of the fonts in the county indicate Saxon workmanship.

The great age of church building in Cornwall comes with the Norman period. It is possible to trace Norman work in about 140 of the 220 parish churches in the county. The plan of the Norman church was usually cruciform, comprising a nave, a chancel the same width as the nave, and small north and south transepts. This plan can be seen practically untouched at Tintagel Church. Norman walls were about three feet thick and were scarcely ever built of granite. The larger churches had lean-to aisles on one or both sides of the nave, and Norman arcades with round or octagonal piers, cushion capitals and semicircular arches. Examples may be seen at Lelant and Morwenstow. The tower was usually placed at the end of the north transept as at Bodmin.

The reason why the Normans rarely touched granite (the stone nearest at hand) was because of the difficulty of working it with the tools to which

they were accustomed. Granite was not usually used in church-building until the fifteenth century. Slate [killas] was largely employed in West Cornwall, whilst in the east and centre of the county stone was obtained from the quarries of Terton Down, Ventergan and Pentewan. Occasionally stone was imported from Bere in Devonshire and Caen in Normandy. Norman fonts are frequent as at Blisland, Gunwalloe, Ruan Minor, St. Beward, Tintagel, Warbstow, Launceston and St. Issey, but it is sometimes doubtful whether the work is original or a copy of later date. Norman windows may be seen at Zennor, tympana at Egloskerry, Caerhayes, Perran-ar-worthal, Treneglos Cury and Mylor. At Ruan Minor is a very beautiful Norman piscina.

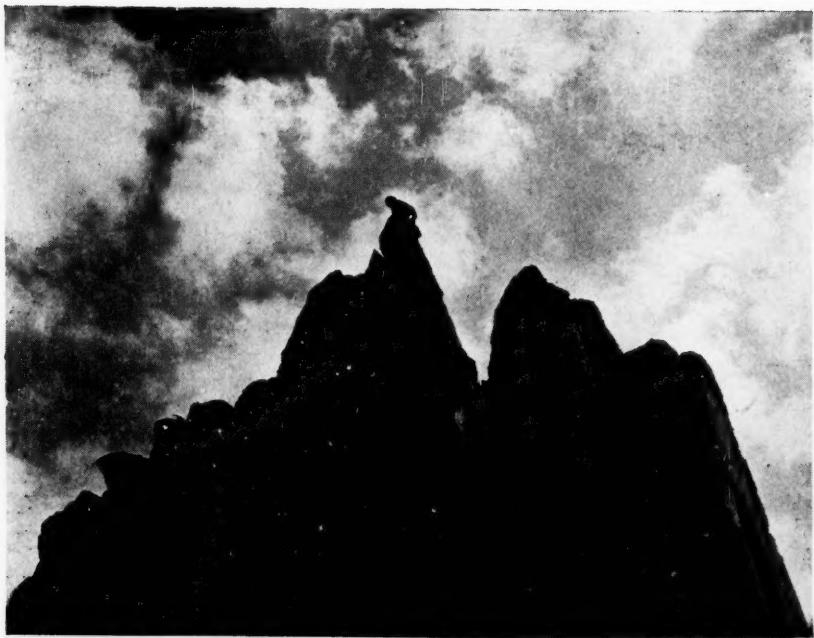
From 1150 to 1200 church-building became lighter, with pointed arches, also the science of vaulting was perfected by which the weight is brought upon piers and buttresses. This first English Gothic style originated from the endeavour to cover the wider and loftiest areas with the greatest economy of stone. It is characterized by slender piers, lofty pointed vaults and long, narrow lancet windows. The greatest elegance of Cornish Gothic was reached from 1260 to 1290. After 1300 the structure of churches began to be overlaid with ornament, the window tracery and vault ribs were of intricate patterns, and the spires were loaded with crocket and ornament. This style ended with the Black Death.

It was not until the fifteenth century that the great recrudescence of building, or rather of addition and restoration, came about. Nearly every church was added to in this century. During the troublous years of the Wars of the Roses the churches must have fallen into ruin and decay, and with new ideas and tastes in vogue the work of former generations was pulled down to allow for enlargement. Over two hundred of our parish churches were added to and restored at this period. From whence came the money and necessary labour to carry out these changes? It is thought the clergy were responsible, assisted by a master designer or architect, who journeyed from one parish to another offering his services, which in turn were controlled by a guild of builders. The Cornish were now very devout Roman Catholics and voluntary labour was prevalent.

During this period of intense activity, where Norman naves had aisles with lean-to roofs, they were removed, and aisles as wide as the naves were built with pitched roofs. Where there were no aisles the north and south walls were taken down, and the typical fifteenth-century arcade was substituted. These aisles ran continuously from east to west, making the plan of a parallelogram and giving extensive seating or standing accommodation.

We now get the typical Cornish church (which outwardly has not changed much since that period), its long roofs running side by side and a lofty western tower. The light is all from the outer walls, the rows of three or four light, four-centred, arched windows and large east and west windows of perpendicular tracery. Granite was now being freely used, and the triumph over this stone may be seen in the elaborate carving in the capitals of piers and in the enrichment of some of the outside walls. The towers are simple and rugged, built in three stages, the lowest with a west door and the tower arch leading into the nave. In West Cornwall the tower is often built without buttresses and of large squared blocks of granite (notably Sancreed), battlemented parapets and roughly-carved pinnacles are prevalent. Some churches, like Gwennap, have a detached tower. In a few churches the old carved waggon roof remains, often of solid oak three inches thick. Most of the beautiful carved bench ends and screens which once adorned our churches have been destroyed. Probably **all**, or nearly all, of the walls were adorned with frescoes as at Breage and Poughill. Only a few of the sixteenth-century stained glass windows survived the Cromwellian period, but those of St. Neot's, being off the beaten track, escaped desecration. At the Reformation all rood lofts from the rood gallery were removed.

Cornwall consists of 254 parishes, of which 42 have been created since 1800. The vast majority of the churches are built on Celtic sites, whilst about 28 are probably manorial chapels of Saxon and Norman origin. Many of the earlier churches were monastic. Priories and collegiate churches were scattered throughout the county. Space does not permit a description of our stone crosses with which the churches were so closely associated. Many examples of medieval church plate remain. Another feature in close association with the Church was the Holy Well, and practically all baptistries of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were built near the wells to provide water for baptism.



THE END OF THE CLIMB

*M. E. Borg-Banks*



WINTER EVENING MULLION      *Jill Waterhouse*

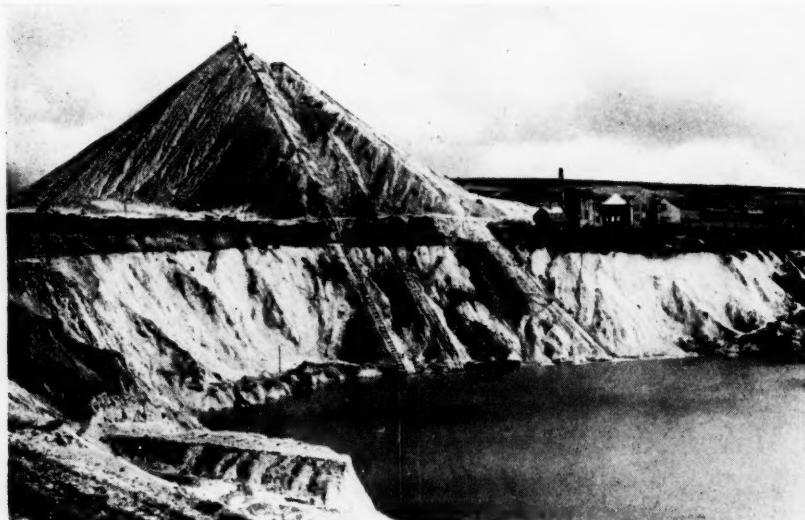


EVENING, NEWLYN HARBOUR      *Stuart Black*



RESTORMEL CASTLE, LOSTWITHIEL

*Studio St. Ives Ltd.*



CHINA CLAY PIT, NEAR ST. AUSTELL

*Studio St. Ives Ltd.*



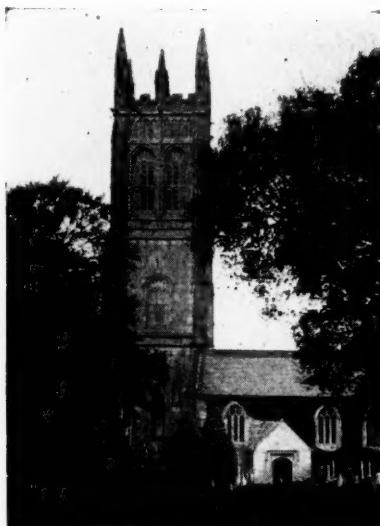
ST. MICHAEL'S MOUNT, AND WESTERN UNION FLEET

*Studio St. Ives Ltd.*



MORWENSTOW CHURCH

*H. Richards, Redruth*



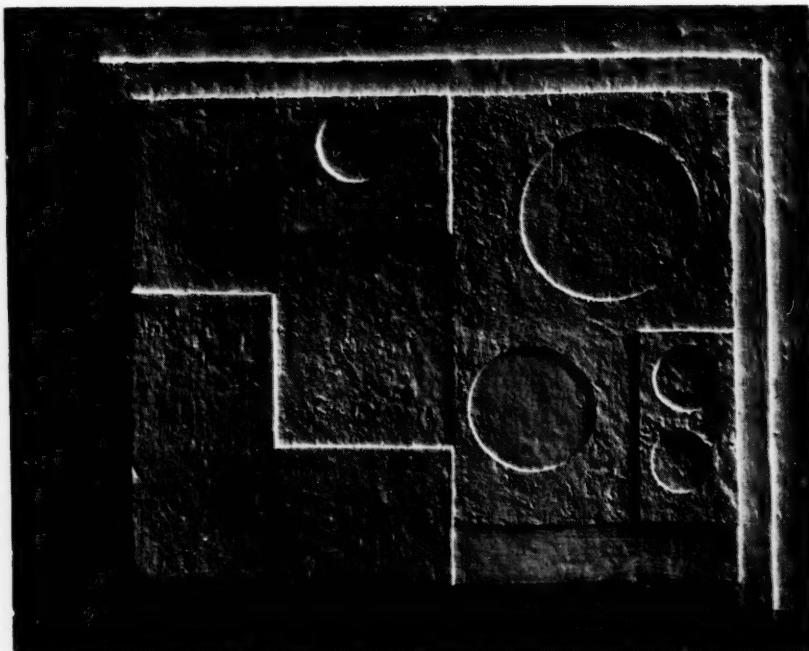
PROBUS CHURCH

*H. Richards Redruth*



MOUSEHOLE, CORNWALL, 1947

*Ben Nicholson*



WHITE RELIEF, 1934

*Ben Nicholson*



ZENNOR

*David Haughton*



THE MIRROR

*Frank Jameson*



HERBERT THOMAS

*Leonard J. Fuller*



LOCKING A FORME: GUIDO MORRIS AT WORK

*Photos Pictorial News Service, Newlyn*

SAINT IVES

# SHOW DAY



TUESDAY MARCH 1948

PRINTED BY GUIDO MORRIS  
WHOSE WORKSHOP WILL BE  
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

ROBIN NANCE

BOOK AND DECORATIVE

DESIGNERS AND MAKERS  
IN FURNITURE OR SMALL  
ARTICLES OF DECORATION,  
BOOKS, MUSIC, TABLETS, IN  
ALL KINDS OF WOODWORK,  
WING, COTTAGE, AND  
ANIMALS OF HIGH WORK  
AND DESIGN. ALSO  
FURNITURE, DECORATION,  
TABLES, CHAIRS, ETC.  
TESTIMONIALS OF THE  
EXCELLENCE OF HIS  
EXPERIENCE, WORK  
AND REPUTATION.



MR. THE CHIEF  
STAFF, R.A.F.  
GENERAL  
QUARTERS,  
GENERAL  
QUARTERS,  
GENERAL  
QUARTERS,  
GENERAL  
QUARTERS,

A POSTER

*Guido Morris*

A DISPLAY NOTICE

*Guido Morris*



## THREE CATALOGUES

*Guido Morris*



## SPECIMENS OF HANDMADE NOTE PAPER

Guido Morris

THE ACTORS IN THE ORDER  
OF THEIR ON-COMING

Samuel Beckett	Waiting for Godot
William Shakespeare	Twelfth Night
Mark Twain	A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court
Edmund Wilson	To the Finland Station
<b>A Play:</b>	
<b>Two Children</b>	
Ring Lardner	Great Expectations
Cormac McCarthy	The Road
Shelley	Frankenstein
Lady Macbeth	Macbeth
Chaucer	The Canterbury Tales
Chopin	Madame Bovary
Henry V	Henry V
Ophelia	Ophelia
Dostoevsky	The Brothers Karamazov
Hawthorne	Mosses from an Old Manse

## THE ORDER OF THE SCENE

**1.** *Any Hyang's Cottage  
Soothed*

**2.** *Rose in Green Bedchamber Palace  
in Springtime*

**3.** *Reconquerer's Return during the first  
anniversary of Romeo and Juliet  
since marriage*

**4.** *Experience in a Depth of Heaven  
in summer*

**5.** *A Star Room in the Queen's Palace  
in winter*



## A SELECTION OF JOBS

Guido Morris

# MY WORK AS A PRINTER

GUIDO MORRIS

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WHEN I began printing in Saint Ives it was eleven years, to a week, from the time when I set up my first press in Somerset and proceeded to learn by experience how to print. For five years I had worked under difficulties ; Army service had interrupted things by another five years ; a year of hardships had followed in which I struggled to re-establish myself in London ; and then, by sheer chance, I had come to Saint Ives. Like so many others, I expected to make only a short stay, and found myself rooted in the place. Saint Ives is like a fly-paper—or is it the lamp that attracts the moths ?

I was lucky enough to find a large empty room on the edge of the sea—what is called a net loft ; in mine nets had actually been made until a few years before. I installed myself in one corner ; brought in a few large tables, a single chair, and a safe ; and built myself an elaborate system of bookshelves and pigeon-holes for papers, out of margarine boxes hoarded from before the war. I spent several days with putty and flat white, and in the end my corner rather resembled the office of a business magnate with ideas about art ; only the telephones were lacking—one imagined them concealed. The rest of the room was bare except for a divan and an old ship's tank turned on its side for a kitchen table and washstand ; this had been salvaged from the beach below the house. I had gas installed, but for the first year I fetched water in buckets from my nearest neighbour's cottage.

Into this place on an afternoon in April 1946 my “iron soul” (as Sven Berlin termed my press) came in a Government lorry from London, along with some three tons of miscellaneous impedimenta and a few hundred books. My troubles were by no means over. By this time I could always print with certainty of at least achieving a respectable job ; my difficulty was still to find enough work. But I had not been in

Saint Ives long before I realized that I had come to an ideal town for The Latin Press eventually to flourish.

I had absolutely no capital and had to ask for advances on my first orders to buy paper. I was fortunate, however, in being in a position to get all the hand-made paper I could pay for, since I was on friendly terms with the people who make it.

Paper is the heart of my job ; the rest of printing is its architecture. And the hand-made papers of England are unique ; their *stuff* is what dreams may be made of—yet so little appreciated by printers in general that the bulk of it goes into filter papers and account ledgers. But from the beginning paper has fascinated me, and the genuine hand-made has always been my choice. Modern machine-made paper is beautiful and consistent, but it has relatively no character. Hand-made paper is full of character ; and in mills where the same families for generations have employed the same families of workers, there must be an atmosphere of friendship inseparable from the feeling of the paper they make.

The first thing that I printed in Saint Ives was an alphabet. Using my largest type, the 72-point size of Bembo (the face I use exclusively), I printed a few copies on a specially attractive thin paper left over from before the war. It was just the twenty-eight letters of the Roman alphabet, and I only set up the type so as to have a forme to print with which to try out my ink and rollers. But I sent it to Gordon Craig a few weeks later. "Like a piece of organ music . . ." he wrote. I still have a framed copy of the job in a corner of my room—where I do my typesetting close to the window overlooking The Island, Porthgidden Beach, and the mutable, everlasting sea.

I had received a few orders before my equipment was even installed ; some people from Richmond with an antique shop wanted stationery and a trade card. And "Saint Christopher's", a most delightful sort of "pension" in Saint Ives (one doesn't know how else to describe it, for it is not a hotel and not a boarding house), kept by Philip and Sally Keeley, friendly to all artists—had ordered notepaper, cards and various advertisement slips. They were my first local customers.

While waiting for paper to arrive I filled in time by printing a display notice for The Latin Press, framed copies of which eventually found their way into hotels and cafés in the town. The design was cruciform. The

words of the notice—under the heading “THE LATIN PRESS, The Private Press of Guido Morris”—ran “HERE FINE PRINTING OF EVERY DESCRIPTION, INCLUDING HAND-MADE NOTEBOOKS, IS UNDERTAKEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND OF THE ARTS OF PEACE”. It was a fitting announcement from one who had just found sanctuary after the long years of war.

The next exciting thing I did was an Invitation to the 26th Anniversary Exhibition of The Leach Pottery, held at the Berkeley Galleries in London, followed by a Chinese dinner. Of this job forty-five copies were required by Bernard Leach, and I printed almost every one on a different paper. The job was designed as a tall oblong, with the wording in smallish capitals running sideways down the centre of the sheet. From a distance it suggested Japanese or Chinese printing (as was, of course, intended), and it has always irritated me when people have turned it on its side to read it. I had a collection of Japanese papers, and used up the best of my collection in printing this job ; while a few were printed on antique English papers collected over a period of years. It was well worth the expenditure of paper, because even now I occasionally meet people who tell me that they saw the invitation in London in 1946, and have remembered it.

That first summer in Saint Ives was one of brilliant sunshine, of mad crowds in the town, of festivities in the evening. Saint Ives was at its most “Continental”—and this was a character of the town which struck one very forcibly on arrival from London. It was the first summer after the war, and people had money to spend.

One evening in the late summer I was introduced to The Toymakers—who had just settled in Saint Ives and were going to make wooden toys. I wrote them copy and printed a display notice announcing “The Wooden Toys of Saint Ives”—which I redesigned about a year later. The second version, printed on an early nineteenth-century paper, was better than the first ; it and another done about the same time for Robin Nance are two of my most successful displays.

The “Basket of Flowers”—the pressmark of The Latin Press—figured in all these jobs. Its history is not without interest. The block—a piece of boxwood beautifully carved (I say “carved” deliberately, because it seems more than engraved)—was sent me by Gordon Craig in 1937. He had found it in a printing office in Lucca many years before and carried it around with him. He sent it to me in case it should, as he put it,

come to life in my hands. I straightway used it on a job—the second of the series of quarto catalogues I printed for R. E. A. Wilson—and it was so successful in relation to my type that I used it on another job, and then others, and so gradually it came to be adopted as my signature.

The block is presumably late eighteenth century French or Italian. It is evidently one of those little devices which are used in books of about that time as ornaments at beginning or end of chapters, but it is one of the nicest of these that I have ever seen. I always wonder if it is to be found in a book, as it is quite likely that it was used. One day I may make a pilgrimage to investigate the archives of printing in Lucca, to discover some sign of it. I have had a metal replica made of the little block now, but I still often use the original.

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In July 1946 was held the first Annual Exhibition of what became known as the Crypt Group. I printed a catalogue, on very white paper, measuring  $7\frac{1}{8}$  by  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches, and this tall, narrow shape gave me scope for a most interesting cover ; it was printed in black, with red sparingly used. I employed a device which has precedent at least from the earliest sixteenth century. The word CATALOGUE was too wide to fit the measure of the page, and I set CATALO in large capitals, duly letter-spaced, and in much smaller capitals on the next line GUE OF AN EXHIBITION. For some time the "catalo" was spoken of with relish !

This first Exhibition held in the Crypt of the New Gallery, 1946, consisted of " Drawings, Paintings & Sculptures by Sven Berlin, John Wells, Peter Lanyon & Bryan Wynter, & Printings by Guido Morris ". It was perhaps the first time anywhere that printing had been exhibited side by side in an art gallery with drawings, paintings and sculpture. The Exhibition was followed by another in August 1947, for which a not quite so successful catalogue was printed by me. In August 1948 the Group gently expired, with its Third Exhibition.

This constitutes a fragment of the history of the Saint Ives Artists' Colony ; all the members of the original Crypt Group, and all those who became allied to it in successive years, are now members of the new Penwith Society of Arts in Cornwall. Unlike the old Saint Ives Society of Artists, the new society at last embraces the craftsmen—Bernard Leach, Robin and Dicon Nance and myself in Saint Ives, and several others in other parts of Cornwall.

In the spring of 1947 I began a more ambitious job. Mr. G. R. Downing had opened his bookshop in the Fore Street, and having a spare room

at the back of the shop he decided to use it as an art gallery. Here were held small one-man shows of the work of the younger group of artists and I was asked to print the catalogues.

Nine catalogues appeared in the rather lavish form used by me exactly ten years earlier for R. E. A. Wilson's Exhibitions in London. They are not all as good as I would like them to have been ; I rather overdid the thing in trying to make each different in appearance, and they had to be produced at short notice ; but at least five of them are wholly successful. They were instrumental in getting me work for London galleries in the following year.

In 1947 and 1948 I did a considerable amount of London work, notably for the Marlborough Galleries in Bond Street, for whom I have printed catalogues and posters. Among these are some of my first experiments with colour, and a poster printed for their Exhibition of early water-colours and drawings by Toulouse-Lautrec has been several times exhibited. The order for a catalogue for the Tate Gallery's Centenary Exhibition of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood came at a time when I was struggling with financial and other difficulties ; there was a delay in delivery, and the presswork was inferior, so that an otherwise fine catalogue was marred. It was not until this year, 1949, that the addition of some much-needed capital made possible a total reorganization of my workshop, with installation of new equipment and the institution of adequate routine.

Posters have been a favourite job of mine in Saint Ives, made possible by the finding of a second and larger Albion press. This had formerly been used for printing the *Hayle Weekly News*, a local newspaper emanating from a small jobbing office in Hayle. The precedent for my posters was established by the series I printed for the Repertory Theatre at Northampton on the eve of my entry into the Army. A member of a University Dramatic Society happened to see them while on holiday in Saint Ives, and I was commissioned to print bills for their twice-yearly plays. Besides working for the Marlborough Galleries, I have made posters for several other London galleries and for many exhibitions held in Saint Ives, notably those at Downing's Bookshop.

The first thing I always do when I get an order for a poster is to induce the customer to leave out most of the copy ! This is not a personal fad ; the result is a far more arresting display, for most people tend to say too much.

For the Saint Austell Brewery Company Limited, an enlightened and progressive business organization, I am printing a series of broadsheets ;

these are being fixed in weatherproof frames outside certain of their houses, and explain the origin of the inn signs and other points of interest concerning the history of the inns. They afford an opportunity for the use of larger sizes of text type than are ordinarily called for, and those examples which were exhibited in a recent Exhibition of Inn Crafts, in London, won prizes.

As a result of my connection with the Brewery, I am now about to submit designs for the redrafting of their general stationery, including menu cards ; and I have no doubt that this will lead to work in the same direction for other firms who value the effect that may be produced by discreet and careful printing.

I am often asked why I prefer " job printing " to the printing of books. Partly it is because a book is too large an undertaking for so small an office, and for the present I shall continue with the kind of work I am doing. The field of book *design* is one which cannot be so easily escaped ; and it is probable that in the near future I shall increasingly undertake such work for publishers. In doing this, however, I shall work not as a " typographer " but as a craftsman printer who handles type ; I have never made a " layout " in my life.

Above all, I find job work interesting, because of its variety ; and I believe it is important, because it has been so much neglected by fine printers as a whole.



# D. H. LAWRENCE IN CORNWALL

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## I. LAWRENCE AND THE CORNISH

M A R K   H O L L O W A Y

“**W**E go to Cornwall on Thursday. There is the beginning.”  
There is the beginning . . . And there is Lawrence, in a nutshell, always beginning, always dreaming of that new era of his ; always looking towards that colony—in Florida, Italy, Cornwall, Australia, or New Mexico—that colony which would be “a move outwards into the uncreated future”, a modern Pantisocracy.

At this time, the end of December 1915, Lawrence thought that he was on his way to Florida, where a few chosen friends would join him. Meanwhile no time should be lost in starting the new life. It should start in Cornwall. A week later, from J. D. Beresford’s cottage at Porthcothan, Lawrence wrote eulogistically of Cornwall and the Cornish :

“ There is a rare quality of gentleness in some of them—a sort of natural, flowering gentleness which I love . . . I do like Cornwall. It is still something like King Arthur and Tristan. It has never taken the Anglo-Saxon civilization, the Anglo-Saxon sort of Christianity. One can feel free here for that reason—feel the world as it was in that flicker of pre-Christian civilization when humanity was really young.”

A month later he was less enthusiastic. He was still satisfied with the Cornish scenery, but not with the people. Nature was magnificent—the seas broke against the rocks “like the first craggy breaking of dawn in the world” ; and this comforted him after “all this whirlwind of dust and grit and dirty paper of a modern Europe”. But what had happened to the people ? They had become “detestable, and yet *not* detestable” ;

they had lost the sense of magic and the aristocratic mystique which an ancient race ought to have ; they had become "like insects". "Not that I've seen very much of them," he adds, somewhat ingenuously. (He had been in Cornwall exactly one month.) "I've been laid up in bed. But going out, in the motor and so on, one sees them and feels them, and knows what they are like."

He had *felt* what they were like. There is your typical, infuriating, and unmistakable Lawrence. But had he *felt* what they were like—or had he made the Cornish conform to his feeling?

Like any genius of the prophetic type, Lawrence remained faithful to his intuitive gift ; and in attempting to express his sometimes almost inexpressible "feelings" he was driven to those abominable repetitions, those turgid redundancies, those infuriating pig-headed convictions which no fact could substantiate. But his general conclusions, his prophetic insight, his desperate call to mankind, are unassailable precisely because of their nature. They carry conviction because they appeal to the source from which they emanated in Lawrence—the blood and the heart and the racial memory of man.

Like all geniuses, nothing could satisfy him. He wanted the impossible. The fact that the Cornish country and its people had changed less than almost any other part of England, was not enough. He did not seem at all thankful for the fact that in this outthrust leg of the British Isles much that is "detestable" in southern England is kicked vigorously into the Atlantic. The man-made scenery, the arterial roads, the metroland architecture, the tawdry seaside resorts, the catchpenny cafés and motorist's hotels—most of this twentieth-century automobile world is left behind when one crosses the Tamar (or it was left behind in Lawrence's day). And there is little significance in pithead machinery or steam-driven vessels compared with the tin in the hills and the fish in the sea and the reckless spirit which has sought them out from one age to another. Scarcely touched by the Industrial Revolution, the Cornish people, a race of fishermen and miners, almost islanded upon their narrow peninsula, never lost their pride or their status as human beings in that fool's paradise of a black gold rush. But this was not enough for Lawrence. "They ought to be living in the darkness and warmth and passionateness of the blood, sudden, incalculable. Whereas they are like insects gone cold, living only for money, for *dirt*. They are foul in this. They ought all to die."

They live only for money . . .

I haven't noticed it. I have noticed that Cornish men and women

work to live—but that is permitted, I believe, in the most ideal society. They work to live, to extract the matter of their lives direct from soil or sea, people who find greater sympathy with the soil they work and with the seas they plunder for fish, than with all the artificial claptrap of an industrial-ridden twentieth-century England ; for they have behind them centuries of fearless men who have gone out daily among jagged rocks and swirling waters ; strongly, superstitiously, religious ; shrewd, parochial and inbred ; strongly independent ; but kindly and, above all, leading what I can but feebly describe as balanced lives, taking their just place within the rhythms which surround them, man in control of Nature yet in close contact with it and with the roots of all life.

On the eve of his departure from Porthcothan to Tregerthen, Zennor, Lawrence wrote to Beresford :

"I don't like these people here. They have got the souls of insects. . . . They are all *afraid*—that's why they are so mean. But I don't really understand them. Only I know this, I have never in my life come across such innerly selfish people."

He gives no reasons, of course, for any of his statements—that would be too much to expect ; but it is possible that the natural suspiciousness of the Cornish for any "foreigner" irked him. However, there were very few Cornish at Zennor, he wrote, and "they seem decent".

And "decent" they were, apparently. At any rate, Lawrence liked Tregerthen, and felt at ease there. And when he went up to Bodmin to register, he atoned for some of his former remarks by writing of the Cornish as "most unwarlike, soft, peaceable, ancient. No men could suffer more at being conscripted".

The dark features, the round heads and the almost universally lovely eyes of the women and children are nearer to their Breton counterparts than to the English ; and although modern transport has brought the English and Cornish closer together, so that the ancestry is often indistinguishable, yet the roots of separatism run deep, for it is but five generations since a Cornish language was spoken, and there is even now a handful of "Cornish nationalists". An insularity both racial and geographic accounts for the clannishness and apparent "inner selfishness" of the Cornish people.

This "inner selfishness" is no more than the shrewd self-preservation of a hard-living people intent on scratching a living from the rocks and the soil, with little time, and perhaps little inclination, to speculate on life beyond the border. It is the self-preservation of a small country against a greater ; for until comparatively recent times the Cornish knew little,

and suspected a great deal, the sophistications of Anglo-Saxon civilization. And when they became acquainted with this civilization, it was through artists, rich affected idlers, speculators, salesmen, and the inevitable tourists who looked for a larger Hampstead Heath in the beautiful Cornish country. The first artists who migrated to St. Ives from London were received with jeers and, on occasion, with stones, by the local fishermen. These good men were amazed at what they, no doubt, considered a completely unnatural, and therefore barbaric, species. If, later, they put away hostility and at the same time found that these colonists and tourists brought money with them, who can blame them?

It was not to be expected that Lawrence, even if he appreciated these facts, would have or could have altered his way of life. And where many who were familiar with the cantankerousness of certain artists were unable to excuse, or even to suffer Lawrence, it was not to be expected that these simple and suspicious people would be able to understand him. However, they accepted him, and no doubt he would either have repudiated his "insect" gibe, or would at least have applied it generally to mankind, if he had been asked. He was happy at Zennor, happier than he had thought it possible to be in England; and it is possible that he might have settled there indefinitely. But that was not to be.

He had seriously contemplated entering into one of those "blood brotherships" which were a constant preoccupation with him. The intended partner was a young Cornishman who worked with Lawrence in the Zennor fields. In attempting to explain his purpose and theories to the young man, Lawrence must have puzzled him considerably. No doubt he also provided him with an enthralling subject of conversation among the villagers, who became increasingly curious and suspicious of this bearded "foreigner" with his German wife and weird ideas. There was always the possibility of finding a particularly curious and daring villager lying within earshot of the cottage to collect the latest titbit of outrageous dialogue between husband and wife. And when Lawrence bought a piano and his wife added to her other provocations and indiscretions a repertoire of German songs, while German submarines were active in the English Channel, any village in the England of 1917 could have been excused for its suspicions, especially as the Lawrences' cottage had a flat-roofed turret overlooking the sea, and a coal boat had been wrecked at the foot of the cliff.

It says much for the local people that the Lawrences remained unmolested for as long as they did; and when the blow fell, its instigator

appears to have been some half-demented creature who was a stranger to the district. At first the Lawrences' letters were withheld and examined. Then their cottage was searched by the military in their absence ; and finally they were ordered, without explanation, to leave Cornwall in three days. . . .

A Zennor farmer who recently talked with a friend of mine described Lawrence as "that writer chap who was here in the first war". I think Lawrence would have welcomed this description, in which genius and ordinary labouring man are not distinguished by any acquired refinement, but are regarded as human beings moving in a landscape which cares little for the achievement of the specialist, because it is a hard task-master in the art of acquiring a simple living. For here all life is centred in earth and sea, men carry the mark of the sun and the clouds in their faces, and live a life sympathetic to the rhythms of Nature, in whose eyes the transitory greatness of an individual is no more than an outcrop of rock thrown up by the ages, and soon forgotten amid the daily toil.

## II. THE TREGERTHEN EPISODE

DAVID LEWIS

In his essay on Edgar Allan Poe Lawrence made, among others, two very revealing statements. "The central law of all organic life is that each organism is intrinsically isolate and single in itself." "In spiritual love the contact is purely nervous. The nerves of the lovers are set vibrating in unison like two instruments. The pitch can rise higher and higher. But carry this too far, and the nerves begin to break, to bleed, as it were, and a form of death sets in."

There is no doubt Lawrence believed in these axioms. He respected his own inviolability to such an extent that it was his own "vibrations" that set the pace. Of this he was fully aware. He was a man self-consciously profligate of his moods, acutely effusive, bitter : when he considered himself provoked he was combustibly provocative, when he felt enamoured his passions ran to the extreme of bestowing his alls on his friends found in favour to entice them to his side : this last he stretched as far as he could, as if to test the elasticity of illusion. The urgency of a working basis for his vibrations of spiritual accord caused Lawrence to pursue, with astonishing integrity of purpose, his felicitous idea of forming a colony of such "instruments", somewhere away from

the chance of interference. After the Cornish failure (Lawrence-Murry & Co., then Lawrence-Peter Warlock & Co., crashed at Tregerthen) untiringly he chased the idea to Italy, Ceylon, Australia, the Mississippi basin, etc., until finally, in Mexico, he achieved Taos, with Lady Brett.

Tregerthen, 1916, "our Rananim", was his idea's first failure. Reciprocally, one might blame the Murrys for their part in it. Katherine Mansfield should have known her Lawrence better. She and Murry had edited a paper with him previously, for two months in 1915. And his plans were never long cashiered from his talk or his correspondence. She paid for trusting a short circuit not to shock. Only Frieda Lawrence has left a sweet account of Miss Mansfield's little Cornish visit : "I see Katherine Mansfield and [J. Middleton] Murry arriving on a cart, high up on all the goods and chattels, coming down the lane to Tregerthen. Like an emigrant, Katherine looked. I loved her little jackets, chiefly the one that was black and gold like bees. . . . I can remember days of complete harmony between the Murrys and us, Katherine coming to our cottage so thrilled at my foxgloves, tall in the small window seat." The passage suggests all the suppression-out-of-sympathy necessary to salvage Lawrence, to sweeten the rancour which anyway Katherine Mansfield surprisingly managed to transcend, to resuscitate, if resuscitation be needed, the Lawrentian ideal of human conduct and relationship.

With Lawrence ideal and actuality sat enthroned in magic principalities set uncommonly far apart. His life was not, as he might have had it, spent as a courier passing between the twain ; but as a perpetual wanderer in no-man's-land conjuring consolatory images. Had he lived longer his prophetic may have turned into embittered ironies. Possibly quicker to probe, the second time, the truth about Lawrence, in her letters on the Tregerthen failure Katherine Mansfield blamed everything but Lawrence's symptomatic contrariness. One of these, to S. S. Koteliansky, dated 11th May, 1916, about a fortnight after she arrived, reads : "I have not written before because everything has been so *unsettled*, now it is much more definite . . . It is not a really nice place. It is so full of huge stones but now that I am writing, I do not care, for the time. It is so very temporary. It may be over next month, in fact, it will be."

At this particular moment, March 1916, Lawrence found himself on singularly good terms with J. Middleton Murry. I say this, because of all Lawrence's relationships, in that with Murry he proved most cruelly fickle. Thus, to Middleton Murry and Katherine Mansfield he turns a few days after his arrival in Zennor, from The Tinner's Arms on 5th March, 1916, he wrote an hypnotic letter :

"I feel we ought to live here, pitch our camp and unite our forces, and become an active power, here, together . . . It is a most beautiful place, a tiny village nestling under high, shaggy moorhills, a big sweep of lovely sea beyond, such lovely sea, lovelier than the Mediterranean. It is five miles from St. Ives, and seven miles from Penzance. To Penzance one goes over the moors, high, then down into Mount's Bay, all gorse now, flickering with flowers ; and then it will be heather ; and then hundreds of foxgloves. It is the best place I have been in.

"We have been looking for houses. There is nothing satisfactory, furnished. And I am terribly afraid to take a big place.

"What we have found is a two-roomed cottage, one room up and one down, with a long scullery. But the rooms are *big* and *light*, and the rent won't be more than 4s. It isn't furnished, but with our present goods we shall need so little. One pays so little rent.

"The place is rather splendid. It is just under the moors, on the edge of a few rough stony fields that go to the sea. It is quite alone, a little colony.

"There are two little blocks of buildings, all alone, a farm five minutes below. One block has three cottages that have been knocked into one, and the end room upstairs made into a tower-room ; so it is a long cottage with three doors and a funny little tower at one end. . . . The other block is at right angles, and is two tiny cottages. But it is all sound, done up, dry-floored, and light. I shall certainly take the little cottage.

"What I hope is that one day you will take the long house with the tower, and put a bit of furniture in it ; and that Heseltine [Peter Warlock] will have one room in your long cottage ; and that somebody else will have the second cottage ; that we are like a little monastery ; that Emma is in your kitchen, and we all eat together in the dining-room of your cottage, at least lunch and dinner ; that we share expenses. The rent will be very little, the position and all is *perfectly lovely*. Katherine will have the tower room with big windows and panelled walls (now done in black and white stripes, broad, and terracotta roof) and Jack would have the study below, you two would have the *very charming* bedroom over the dining-room ; and then there are two bedrooms over the kitchen and pantry. The tower room is not accessible, save from Jack's study.

"There is a little grassy terrace outside, and at the back the moor tumbles down, great enormous grey boulders and gorse. . . . It would be *so splendid* if it could come off : *such a lovely place* : our Rananim.

"Write and tell me how you feel. . . . We mustn't go in for any more *follies* and removals and uneasiness. . . ."

It is his methods, not the sincerity (singlemindedness of purpose) of Lawrence's intention that might be questioned. In his selectiveness he had chosen the vibrations of Middleton Murry, Katherine Mansfield and Peter Warlock to unite with his own. His next letter, written after a further three days, shows how thoroughly confident he was that the citadel was being stormed.

"Really you must have the other place. I keep looking at it. I call it already Katherine's house, Katherine's tower. There is something *very* attractive about it. It is very old, native to the earth, like rock, yet dry and all the light of the hills and the sea. It is only twelve strides from our house to yours ; and we can talk from the windows : and besides us, only the gorse, and the fields, and the lambs skipping and hopping like anything, and the seagulls fighting with the ravens, and sometimes a fox, and a ship on the sea.

"You must come, and we will live here a long, long time, very cheaply. . . .

"And don't talk any more of treacheries and so on. Henceforward let us take each other on trust. I am sure we can. We are so few, and the world so many, it is absurd we should be scattered. Let us be happy and industrious together. . . ."

Should one pause to inspect these two letters it becomes abundantly clear how Lawrence convinced the Murrys to accept. Or rather, how convinced they would have been had they refused. Phrases such as "dark jewel" referring to St. Michael's Mount, and "lovelier than the Mediterranean" to describe the Atlantic off the Cornish coast ; words like "Rananim" and "monastery" applied to the Tregerthen group of granite cottages, and skipping lambs and ravens and gulls applied to the fields ; all this cheek by jowl with such practical details as the positioning of rooms, furniture, Emma, meals, rent, etc., are as obviously persuasional as the illegitimately elysial atmosphere he was at pains to compare, silently, because he was cunning enough to know the Murrys would, with the Murrys' own London background, from which, he would like them to assume, he had, as always, contrived successfully to escape. Europe had been grovelling in its own guts for two years, and there was no indication, then, that the grovelling should not go on, and on and on. But at Zennor peace, solid, pagan peace. Houses close to the earth, work to be done, work started and not complete. Katherine Mansfield was in the habit of saying "I don't want to earn a living, I want to live !".

Here the Murrys are blameworthy also. During October and November of the previous year, 1915, Lawrence, Murry and Katherine Mansfield combined in editorship to produce three numbers of a periodical they called *Signatures*. "It was a thin, tan-covered pamphlet, written entirely by the editors, and was published by subscription only, price 2s. 6d. for six copies. . . . Of the 250 printed, 120 were destroyed. Katherine Mansfield wrote under the *nom de plume* of Matilda Berry and contributed three sketches, of which two were collected in the volume entitled *Bliss*." Undoubtedly the perennial difficulties that beset under capitalised papers (there was a small-time Jewish printer, an office with sparse furniture) would of their own have caused the paper's death. But that the editors temperamentally backbit into the bargain is hinted at, darkly, but quite plainly, in the two letters I have quoted, leaving them all "uneasy" afterwards, a feeling Lawrence was longing, of course, to obliterate. Years later, in his autobiographical piece *Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine*, published in 1925, he made his parting gesture of forgiveness, for that, and presumably for Tregerthen too, by omitting to mention his and his collaborators' wounds.

When *Signatures* failed Katherine Mansfield left London for Bandol, southern France, to escape the worst of the English winter. She was a very sick woman, dying, almost imperceptibly, of consumption. So that, for instance, Lawrence's breathless comparison of the Cornish seas to the Mediterranean—made, mark, in March month—was not merely poppycock but (Lawrence was no purposeless liar) a deliberate delusion. His "few rough stony fields" give scarcely the impression of fields broken through by ominous boulders floating in their deep greens like icebergs, an entire coast of *carns* and cliffs charged with winds and sea rages. The spindle-grass moors he engarlands with foxglove and gorse, and says nothing of the cold gales and uncomfortably wet descent of mists. He speaks of the cottages assigned to the Murrys as big-roomed and dry, yet the room Katherine Mansfield, the consumptive, was to take as her study, the Tower, leaked so much it was considered uninhabitable, until a few years ago, when its flat roof was replaced by the pitched roof it now wears. The thing about the affair to italicize is Lawrence's energetic confidence that once he got the Murrys to Cornwall he could persuade them to put up with these and whatever other appalling discomforts a prolonged stay in "Rananim" entailed by conscripting them as instruments in his essential spiritual love. As an isolate organism Lawrence also was selfless. By removing his jacket and cleaning out the house from ceiling to doorstep, he showed his good faith. It is said that no one

scrubbed like Lawrence. And he got Frieda to festooning the staircase to the Tower with a "jolly adornment" of painted flowers.

But if Miss Mansfield should have known her Lawrence better, Lawrence grossly misjudged his feminine Miss Mansfield. Following her letter to Koteliansky she wrote to Beatrice Campbell :

" To-day I can't see a yard, thick mist and rain and a tearing wind. Everything is faintly damp. The floor of the Tower is studded with Cornish pitchers catching the drops. Except for my little maid (whose ankles I can hear stumping about the kitchen) I am alone, for Murry and Lawrence have plunged off to St. Ives with rucksacks on their backs and Frieda is in her cottage . . . I feel as though I . . . have drifted out to sea—and would never be seen again."

Again to Beatrice Campbell :

" Nothing but the clock and the fire, and sometimes a gust of wind breaking over the house. This house is like a ship left high and dry. There is the same hollow feeling. The same big beams and narrow doors and passages that only a fish could swim through without touching. And the little round windows at the back are just like portholes. . . ."

To Lady Ottoline Morrell a week later :

" We are going to leave here as soon as we can. We are at present looking for a little cottage where we can put our pieces of furniture, for we must have a tiny home and a garden and we must live again. . . ." Before May was out the Murrys had moved to Mylor, near Penryn. Lawrence went with them most of the way, helping them with their stuff and preventing too deep a rupture in their relations :

" Lawrence has gone home again. We walked with him as far as the ferry and away he sailed in a little open boat pulled by an old, old man. Lawrence wore a broad linen hat and he carried a rucksack on his back. He looked rather as though the people of Falmouth had cried to him as the Macedonians did to Paul, and he was on his way over to help them."

Nonetheless, Lawrence was injured. His epitaph on the episode was bitter.

" Unfortunately the Murrys do not like the country—it is too rocky and bleak for them. They should have a soft valley, with leaves and the ringdove cooing. And this is a hillside of rocks and magpies and foxes."

# PORTRAIT OF REDRUTH

FRANK MICHELL

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**I**N attempting to paint this portrait we will take our stand upon four steps or platforms in turn. The great granite mass of Carn Brea is our first step. This was the birthplace of the town, and it has ever been its background and landmark. Much has been written about this hill both of a fanciful and scientific nature. There is ample evidence of man's habitation of Carn Brea from the remains of Stone Age huts and the relics of this period, and also of the Bronze Age, which have been discovered on its heights. A Roman urn and coins of various rulers of that Empire have been found on the Carn, and also a coin of a North African kingdom of 148 B.C. A granite stone set up by the Romans, A.D. 224–244, may be seen near Gwennap Pit just south-east of Redruth. Tradition tells us that woodcock once abounded in the valley from the foot of Carn Brea to the north coast, and that there were trees from the hill to Portreath, so that a squirrel could travel from the Carn to the sea without touching ground. The castle was probably never really used as a fortress, and it is sited a little east of the place of an ancient defensive earthwork. Davies Gilbert, writing in 1820, says that the castle was built by the Bassets as an ornament to their deer park. As far back as 1379 a licence was granted to the Bassets to hold a service in their chapel on Carn Brea. The monument nearby was raised in 1836 to the memory of Lord De Dunstanville and Basset, it is 90 feet high, stands 750 feet above sea level, and cost £1,000 to erect.

We mount to the second step, the ecclesiastical story. About A.D. 550, half a century before the time of St. Augustine of Canterbury, St. Euny came from Ireland to Lelant and thence to Redruth. He made contact with the primitive tribes of Carn Brea, taught them Christianity and built himself a cell, probably on the eastern slope of the hill. His holy well was in the valley below (the place may still be visited), and he built

his oratory on or about the site of the present parish church. The times gradually became more settled and civilized, and the natives descended from the hills to the greater space of the valleys and surrounding country. The population increased with greater security. St. Euny's little chapel was probably followed by a rude Saxon type building and later by a Norman church, the foundations of which, showing an apse, were exposed in 1878 beneath the present church floor. The earliest mention of the church fabric occurs in 1283, and the oldest known spelling of its name, and that of the parish, is found in 1316, when it was styled "Sancti Eunyny de Rudruthe". In 1400 a licence was granted to the rector for a chapel of St. Rumon, Cross Street. This was probably a shrine and resting-place for pilgrims passing through the town to St. Michael's Mount, and built on or about the site occupied to-day by Murdock House and where a few remains may be seen. This grant also provided for a chapel to St. Christopher (site unknown) and a deed of 1513 shows that there was another chapel, dedicated to St. Ninian, at Sinns in the ancient parish on the road from Redruth to Porthtowan. On four occasions between 1411 and 1419 Bishop Stafford of Exeter held ordinations (for minor orders) at Redruth which, for this purpose at least, seems to have been a centre and a place of some importance. About 1495 the parish church was rebuilt—only the fine perpendicular tower of which remains to-day. This tower contains eight bells dating from 1744, 1777 and 1935 (change ringing was reintroduced in 1912 "for the first time in living memory"), and on its eastern wall are carved the heads of Henry VII and his queen. A Norman gargoyle may be seen in the angle of the nave with tower. In 1768 the present church was, in the words of Davies Gilbert, "constructed on the exact situation of the former". The three roofs are concealed by a coffered ceiling supported on eight Tuscan columns, four on each side. Many additions and improvements of good local workmanship have been made to the furnishing. Within the church are memorial tablets to S. V. Pryce, 1817 (son of Dr. William Pryce, of Redruth, who published *Mineralogia Cornubiensis*, etc.) and William Davey, 1827, who did much to improve methods of mining and the lot of the miners—his likeness here was sculpted by Chantry. There is also a portion of the ancient Celtic parish preaching cross, worked stones of the fifteenth-century fabric and a medieval leaden crucifix which was dug up in the churchyard. The church Sunday School was established at the early date of 1780. From 1277 until 1916 the Basset family held the patronage. The modern church of St. Andrew is built on or about the site of the old Treruffe Manor House.

John Wesley visited Redruth many times between 1745 and 1789. He was a friend of the Rev. John Collins, M.A., Rector 1734-1775. At the time of Wesley's last visit he writes in his *Journal* of meeting the Methodist Society in the town, and in the 1796-7 Church Rate the Methodist stewards are mentioned, and by 1803 there is a rate on the Methodist preacher's house. The present Wesleyan chapel dates from 1826, and there was at least one earlier on or about the same site. The Baptist Society in the town was established in 1802 and the Society of Friends in 1763. Most other religious bodies have subsequently had representation in Redruth.

The third step in painting the portrait is copper and tin. Redruth has been one of the great mining areas of the world, and the industry is immemorial, for Cornish "mining" existed before English history. Legend has it that St. Paul came to Creegbraws, near Redruth, for tin. Ryd, later Rys or Res, means a "ford" and Ruth, pronounced "Reeth", means "red". The Red River which reached the sea at Portreath (Red Cove or, perhaps, Sand Cove) derived its name and blood-red colour from the tin streaming industry which it served for centuries and which was well established by 1301. After Queen Elizabeth's time shallow-shaft mining, which had commenced in a small way about a hundred years before, gradually developed. Towards the end of the seventeenth century there sprung up extensive copper mining ventures around Redruth. Due to the introduction of the steam engine there was much industrial prosperity, and the population of the town increased sixfold during the century, being about 6,000 by the year 1800. During the nineteenth century the mining for tin followed that for copper, and the population eventually rose to its peak of 10,685 in 1871. In 1838 there were employed in twenty-nine mines in the Redruth district 6,886 men, women and children, and copper ore was sold to the value of £315,728. It has been estimated that there are sixty-six abandoned workings in the parish.

To complete the sketch, and it is but a sketch for the subject matter is almost without limit, we stand on the last step—the town of Redruth. It is a mile by the direct route of the Church Lanes from the ancient church town. It came into being some time before the fourteenth century, around a ford on the stream flowing to Portreath, which was here crossed by a very ancient road. The Cornish word for tribe or clan is "trev", and in Redruth there have never been more or less than six treves—Treleigh, Treruffe, Trefula, east of the stream; Trewirie, Trewingey and Trengweath on the west. The town grew up and became a centre

at the meeting-place of five treves near the spot where the main track crossed the stream. The Church-town remained a hamlet apart while another village developed to the north beyond the Green. This latter was Plain-an-gwarry—the place of the play—where stood the open-air theatre or round for miracle plays, etc. When visited by Borlase in 1792, it remained a mound “high but ruinous”. The town developed but little south of the main road (Fore Street) and the parallel street (Back Lane West and East, which may well have been the original track over the ford which was adjacent to St. Rumon’s Chapel). The long narrow main street had buildings in the middle and numbers of courts leading off on either side. There are records of the visitations of plague in 1592 (84 deaths in an estimated population of 400) and in 1667, and of cholera and smallpox in 1849–50 and 1853. Considerable building took place during William III and Queen Anne’s reign. The first clock tower built, about the end of the seventeenth century, gave place to a second, which, with the market place, was demolished in 1795, and was replaced by the present clock in 1828, which was heightened in 1904. The present, Market House was built in 1877. The eighteenth and nineteenth century building was first to the north and, largely following the construction of the railway across the town in 1852, to the south of the main street. By about 1860 the assessable value was £27,000—in 1930 it was £40,000.

Redruth has for at least two and a half centuries been an industrial and commercial community, and its “cultural” activities have sprung largely from men engaged in these pursuits. Space permits us only to list some of the outstanding citizens who have not already been mentioned (for many the town was their birthplace). Fourteenth century : Sir Davis Aunselm, Rector, made the best copy of Edward I valuation of English churches ; Ralph Redruth (or Rudryth) became Chancellor of Oxford University. Fifteenth century : Reginald Mertherderwa, Rector, became Principal of Bull Hall (Merton), Oxford, and willed to be buried in Christ Church. Eighteenth century : Stephen and Anthony Cock of the Tinner’s Parliament (they issued farthing tokens locally) ; William Churchill, High Sheriff ; William Bull, Jonathan Hornblower and Michael Loam, engineers (they lived nearby and Redruth was their post town) ; William Murdoch (he married a Redruth girl) ; Dr. William Boase, surgeon, who helped Murdoch in his experiments and also led a split off Methodism ; James Watt ; Richard Trevithick (his mother was a Redruth girl) ; John Holman and Richard Scantlebury, machinery experimentalists ; R. E. Raspe, author ; Richard Hampton, itinerant preacher (whose biography has been published). Nineteenth century :

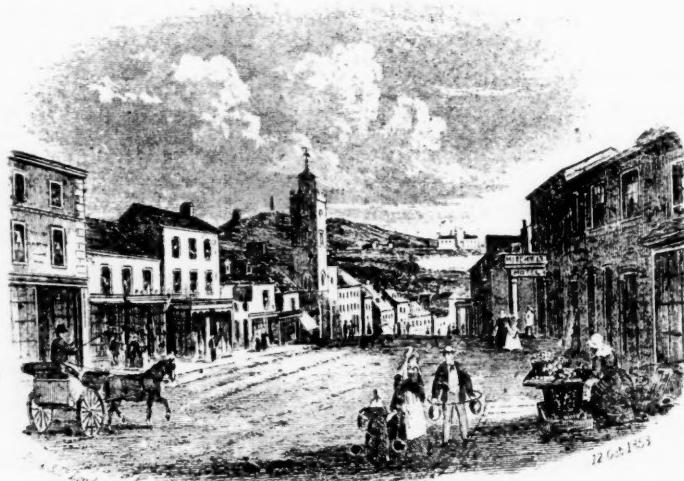
George and Richard Tangye, engineers ; J. T. Blight, author and illustrator ; Dr. Robert Hunt, mining professor and educationalist ; Madam Fanny Moody, singer of international fame ; R. H. Heath, composer and publisher of Cornish carols, etc. ; T. C. Peter, antiquarian and historian and author ; Passmore Edwards. In this century, Philip Snowden, later Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Canon G. H. Doble, D.D.

The fruits of the aspirations and labours of the townsfolk have been evident in many directions. In sports there is a hurling match recorded in 1705, Simmons and Warren were wrestling for championships in 1809 to 1826, four years later saw the establishment of the still flourishing cricket team, the football club (1875) was the first to be formed in Cornwall, and about this time clubs for rambling, bathing, athletics and cycling were all formed. In defence—from Crecy through the times of Blackheath, the Civil War, the Independent Company of George II, the Royal Redruth Infantry (1794), Rifle Volunteers (1860) and up to the present time—the town has maintained its military history. In the field of education, arts and culture : Francis Basset of Tehidy left £5 in 1722 to a Charity School in the parish, but it is not until 1791 that there is any reference to one functioning. This and the Redruth (Grammar) School, or Academy, of 1801, were the precursors of the modern education system in the town. In the interests of adult education and for the “promoting of useful knowledge” the Literary and Scientific Institution operated 1847 to 1939, sponsoring the building of the first public hall in the town, the School of Art and the Mineralogical Museum. Amongst its successors are the Art School, local W.E.A., Old Cornwall Society, Farmers’ Club, technical and other evening classes, and trade and religious organizations.

To music and drama Redruth has always been closely wed. The miracle plays, the “rude” theatre for Edmund Kean and James Dawson, the Sans Pareil theatre, the miners’ and religious choirs, the “grand costume concerts” and “dramatic entertainments” under “distinguished patronage” which took place “before a fashionable audience” in the second half of the Victorian era and were “held in the Druids Hall illuminated by Chinese lanterns”, the formation of philharmonic, debating and photographic societies, an Amateur Dramatic Club in 1885, which grew into a society in 1886 and was incorporated in 1909 into the Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society, the Town Band and Choral Society (both still very much alive), the Redruth Musical Festivals, Cornwall Symphony Orchestra, Madrigal Society, male voice choirs, folk and old-time dancing clubs and the Players Club (started in 1930)—all

these contribute to the stream of culture and entertainment in Redruth, now and in the days of greater self-amusement and larger dependence on local talent.

In conclusion, a few finishing touches to the portrait. The local administration has followed the usual lines of development from churchwardens and parish vestry, waywardens and surveyors of highways, turnpikes and tolls, overseers, justices of the peace and constables (1800). The need of transport for expanding industry prompted the railways from Redruth to Portreath in 1809, Devoran in 1826, and Hayle in 1838. Many passenger or goods journeys were still made by water, often from Portreath. Probably the earliest Redruth man to become the editor of a local newspaper was Mr. Garland (a well-known speaker and writer in his time, whose biography was published in 1868). He became Editor of the *Cornubian* when it started in 1830. By 1846 there was a weekly newspaper in Redruth, followed by *Cornish Mining and General Advertizer*, 1853, *Cornubian and Cornwall Mining Times* (revived in Redruth) and the *Redruth Times*, both 1863, *Parish Magazine*, 1878 (unbroken publication to the present) and *Cornish Mail*, 1926. A bank was doing considerable business and issuing notes before 1764, there was a post office in 1823, the gas works was opened in 1827.



Fore Street, Redruth, Cornwall

12 OCT. 1858

# Art

## BEN NICHOLSON

J. P. HODIN

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IT was at the end of the war when for the first time I saw one of Ben Nicholson's more important exhibitions. They were paintings from his most recent period of work, compositions, some smaller some larger, of circles and rectangular forms, sensitive lines, intense colours, then again complete white pictures, in which the only tones came from shadows, which appeared on closer view to be bas-reliefs. The exhibition left an impression of the same constant quality and clarity, something very exact, eliminating all vagaries, following its own laws, coined by a scientific spirit. All the work seemed to express one formula and yet at the same time something disquieting emerged from them. I did not know how to approach this art. I began to analyse my impressions and arrived at certain rational conclusions. I found that its stability in the unstable times in which we live produced a calming effect. I found a conscious leaning towards a classical formative tendency, in opposition to all the psychopathological romanticism of the surrealists. I found this art very typically English, remembering the strong classical tradition in English architecture and its sense of severe proportions, very typically protestant in reducing the sensual to certain precisely limited strong colour planes. In addition, it showed a relationship to contrapuntal music.

As I have said, I arrived at these conclusions more by a rational than by an intuitive process, which irked me ; for art, I thought, should speak primarily through the senses to the mind. My doubts were further strengthened by the remarks of an impressionist painter. "Nicholson is an architect plunged into painting", he said. "The fields are so beautifully green just now, how can he leave it to others to paint them?" I said : Everybody builds the world in which he can live. I do not doubt

the sincerity or the taste or the talent of this artist. What is it, then, that makes him work like that? Such things the artist does, either with pleasure or he is killed by them. I remember having read how Bertrand Russell defended his philosophy of logical analysis, which accepts only an absolute unshakable objective truth. He said that the aims of this school are less spectacular than those of most philosophers. It refuses to introduce metaphysical muddles into mathematics, and intends to purge its subjects of fallacies and slipshod reasoning. This philosophy contains a kernel of critical self-limitation. In the same way Ben Nicholson consciously renounced, in one period of his development, the representational. Perhaps, I thought, one can learn to see the beauty of this art without approaching it only through the intellect.

W. Kandinsky said once : "The acute angle of a triangle in contact with a circle is no less effective than the finger of God in contact with the finger of Adam in the painting of Michelangelo." Here it is indicated that the reason for abstraction from reality is to reach the objective. That artists like Ben Nicholson strive for such a goal I see in the words of Piet Mondrian : "If objective vision were possible, it would give us a true image of reality. The vision of the new man has liberated itself. . ." That is the philosophy behind abstract painting, what is the quality of its style ? "The limitation of the means employed", says Braque, "gives the style, produces the new form and stimulates creation. The limitation of the means is often the reason for the charm and power of primary painting." Here we are on the tracks of Ben Nicholson's reason for using pure geometric forms. What does he say himself ? "Realism", we read in one of his statements, "has been abandoned in the search for reality. One would like to spell it with a capital R so that the reality in art may be distinguished from the reality of tangible things. The principle objective of abstract art is precisely this reality. Painting and religious experience are the same thing. It is the question of the perpetual motion of a right idea." Here we stop short a moment. Religious feeling and abstract painting, do they not belong to a different sphere of sensation ? In another of his statements Ben Nicholson quotes a speech of Eddington's published in 1931 : "Not only the laws of Nature, but space and time and the material universe itself are constructions of the human mind. To an altogether unexpected extent the universe we live in is the creation of our minds. The nature of it is outside scientific investigation. If we are to know anything about that nature it must be through something like religious experience." Here Ben Nicholson breaks in with : "As I see it, painting and religious experience are the same thing, and what we are

all searching for is the understanding and realization of infinity—an idea which is complete with no beginning, no end, and therefore giving to all things for all time." In these words the constructive ability of our minds which involve hypothesis for physics and style elements in art, is made the equivalent of the creative faculty and has something absolute in effect corresponding to the " Idea " in Plato's philosophy, to the *a priori* experience in Kant. It is the same way as that by which Spinoza arrived at his conception of an ethic " more geometrico " ; as Descartes used in his *Discours de la Méthode*. Form is the created against the un-created, is cosmos against chaos ; abstract form seems to be the elemental, the unchangeable against the eternally changeable—the *panta rei* of Herakleitos.

I had imagined Ben Nicholson as an academic type, a physicist, rather dogmatic and intolerant, inclined to theorize, isolated and reticent. I was met by an agile man of small stature, with light feet like a dancer or an acrobat, and finely modelled physique, a man of youngish appearance in spite of the slightly greying hair round his characteristic head. His face, with its slight strain of sarcasm round the mouth, resembled Voltaire. Nicholson is witty and inclined to take a word as a starting-point for a humorous sally rather than for a serious discussion. " Talking is a difficult way of communicating for me," he said, " that's why I prefer games. A game creates a personal contact without words." And so it is. Ben Nicholson is enthralled with ball games. When one meets him on his bicycle wearing a white cap or a blue beret, he is on his way to the golf links, sometimes it may be to the landscape to draw. He loves tennis, and he has himself invented all kinds of ball games. Two rust-brown cats, every muscle tensed, watch the round object as it flies hither and thither. " Do you love billiards too ? " I ask. " Of course ; I spent one term at the Slade School of Art in London in the year 1911, where I played billiards." And the aesthetics of a tennis court, a billiard table, a golf links, with its greens and fairways, the small flags and the golf clubs, has very much in common with Ben Nicholson's pictures.

Have I not just said that Ben Nicholson often cycles into the country to draw ? An abstract artist ? Yes, he likes to draw from nature. The structure of Cornwall, where he has lived since 1939, seems to suit him. " Look," he says, and points to one of his bas-reliefs in brown colours, " isn't this like Cornwall ? Abstract painting comes from looking at the sea, the land, the sky, it is visual experience. How could it be anything else ? One is what one has seen," and he smiles his mocking smile. Round his neck is a silk scarf in clear colours. Ben Nicholson never wears

a tie. For me he is the man with the coloured silk scarves in the same way as I can only remember Kisling in a blue overall and a red silk handkerchief, Foujita with his fringe and gold ear-rings, Zadkine inseparable from his pipe and huge stick.

His studio. Beneath his windows lies Carbis Bay. On the left the yellow sands and behind it the peninsula of St. Ives, whose silhouette reminds one of Greece. Seagulls wheel in the air, a few Breton boats, with their tobacco-coloured sails, approach the harbour. In the studio stand pictures, stacks of canvases and boards facing the walls ; in the middle a working table, beside it a radio and a gramophone. Ben Nicholson likes to work with music. It is the cleanest artist's studio I have ever seen, a few pictures on the walls, some mugs and jugs on the mantelpiece, some books, brushes and tools.

I touch in our conversation on the difficulty of apprehending an abstract painting directly. This leads us to the question of what function a picture really has.

"It is an expression of the painter's philosophy."

"For the painter . . . but for the onlooker ?"

"Well. Take Ucello's famous battle painting in the National Gallery. All I see there is the artist's visual experience and his philosophy. He was probably asked to paint a battle, and he used that theme for his own purpose. It represents for me not a conflict at all, but you will find certain constructive ideas."

I do not give up. "What can abstract pictures really communicate to others ? It is like Chinese writing which one cannot decipher. Do you think of others when you paint ?"

"I do not paint for others. But if you solve a painting for yourself, for some mysterious reason it is a solution for many other people too. For me abstraction is the liberation of colour and form as a means of expression. An abstract painting also leaves the onlooker free. It does not prevent the development of his own poetic ideas. A painting representing sheep on a Scottish moor is indeed a depressing thing to have for breakfast every morning.

Ben Nicholson is the son of Sir William Nicholson and his wife Mabel Pryde, both important painters of their generation. He grew up in an artistic atmosphere where Whistler, Vermeer, Chardin and Velasquez were admired. At first he wanted to have nothing to do with art. It was with him, as with many other children. They develop by contraries. But when he began to paint, he painted in the way of Vermeer. Soon he recognized there was no step further in that direction.

Ben Nicholson looks out of the window, in his thoughts he turns back through the long years to his beginnings. This artist, one of the most severe in his form and the most style-conscious of contemporary artists, tells us : " In 1918 I started to paint differently. I came across in London the Worticists, an English equivalent of cubism. Especially Wyndham Lewis. This movement was dynamic ; art cannot grow like that, but it was very important in its time. It certainly helped me to break away. In 1920 I saw in Paris for the first time cubist works, including a particular Picasso, probably painted about 1915. It was an upright picture, and in the centre of it there was a green which was terrific. It made such an impact on me that I remember that impact to this very moment. It was definitely more an instinctive than a deliberate process. Cubism was the real revolution for me. Impressionism and Post-Impressionism hardly touched me at that time. Cubism is the normal growth out of Cézanne. It could not come differently. . . . About 1923-24 I saw a picture of Miró. A blue ground, a white cloud of circular form, and a black electric line which traversed both. In cubism there was yet some link with representation, in this Miró there was none. Cubism was not completely free in the sense of music. There is a third impact which had an influence on my art. This time it was not a painting. About 1933-34 I visited Mondrian's studio in Paris for the first time. In this studio, on the second or third floor, he lived for twenty-five years, except during the war, when he was in Holland. He lived there without going outside Paris. Rectangular pieces of board painted with the primary colours, blue, red, yellow, white and neutral grey covered the walls. His room was very high and narrow, a very strange shape ; out of the window one saw the railway lines running into and out of the Gare Montparnasse. The quality of Mondrian's thought in his room and the silences in between the things he said, made a deep impression on me. My reaction was instinctive again, subconscious, not intellectual. It was not until one year later that I understood more of his art and the sensation of space he achieved in such a different way from cubism. The modern movement has grown out of Cézanne and Picasso plus Mondrian, whose work has an element which did not exist in theirs."

The large retrospective exhibition of Ben Nicholson in 1947 illustrated his development and his fight for a personal means of expression. His urge for freedom was decisive, but it never went so far as to become a dogma. He says himself : " I wanted to be so free that I even would not need to use free colour. I dislike the idea that a picture is something precious, the painter something special. There is an artist in everybody.

That was the reason why I welcomed the technique of *collage*. One discovers new things. One does not paint only in one medium, it does away with the precious quality of the easel picture. Art is work and play for me. And work and play are as necessary for me as breathing. Yesterday I began to paint the garden gate. As soon as my hand touches a brush, my imagination begins to work. When I finished I went up to my studio and made a picture. Can you imagine the excitement which a line gives you when you draw it across a surface? It is like walking through the country from St. Ives to Zennor."

The tide came in, some boats which had hitherto laid still began to move towards the harbour of Hayle. Ben Nicholson followed them with his eyes. "It is strange", he said, "how many people are interested in painting now—many more than before. And so many artists express their pessimism with regard to culture. But perhaps there is no reason for optimism. Who knows?" A smile flitted once more over his face. "Optimism . . . Who is an optimist? A man who does not mind what happens as long as it does not happen to himself."

## Theatre

### CORNISH SHAKESPEARIAN FESTIVAL

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IT was after the production of *The Tempest* at The Minack Theatre, Porthcurno in 1932, in which he was asked to assist, that Ernest Peirce first realized the possibility of an annual Shakespearian Festival in Cornwall. He approached the late Mrs. Cade, who was a great enthusiast for cultural entertainment, and begged that she would consider the production of a play in the following year. Both she and Miss Cade gave their consent, and their choice was *Twelfth Night*. The cast was composed entirely of local talent, with the exception of two well-known Shakespearian actors who were staying in the district, namely Stephen Jack and the late Neil Porter. This production was so successful that Mr. Peirce determined that an annual Festival must take place. Then came the difficulties of organization and the finding of those who were sufficiently keen to devote their time during the winter and spring in planning this gigantic undertaking.

About this time Mr. Peirce received an unexpected offer to produce a play in London. With the fee for this production in hand, he engaged a professional company and returned to Cornwall to complete his plans. Thinking there might be money in this beside the joy of giving happiness to thousands, he duly launched his first season of the Cornish Shakespearian Festival. He had a large company, which included several well-known names ; also a large staff which embraced a manager, business manager, publicity manager, advance agent, property master, wardrobe mistress and carpenters, who were all on the salary list. A special poster was designed ; expensive wardrobe hired, and last, but not least, the chairs on which the audience were to sit were hired from Regents Park, London, and duly transported from place to place by lorry.

In spite of the fact that the press was extremely generous and the Festival was opened by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, the heavy costs of the

organization swallowed up every penny of the fee Mr. Peirce had received for his London production. However, the desire for the Festival as an annual event had been established, and now stands, thanks to the Penzance Council, as a feature for all time in Cornwall.

After the financial disaster of the first season, by cutting down his expenses on all sides, Mr. Peirce managed to make both ends meet, and later on a Society was formed under the presidency of Viscount Clifton, and by the splendid work of many well-known people in the county the Festival was kept alive until 1939—when it had to be disbanded owing to the war. During these years Mr. Peirce made up his company mainly from Old Vic students and actors who were willing to accept small salaries and make the season a holiday in Cornwall. At the same time the work was extremely strenuous, as the only free time available was at week-ends. They played four days each week, usually a comedy in the afternoon and tragedy in the evening, quite often with a bus journey between the shows. The wardrobe, scenery and props were travelled on the bus with the company. Monday was set aside for rehearsals. Although the work was hard, everyone enjoyed it, in spite of the fact that they left Penzance by bus at 10 o'clock each morning, seldom returning before 11 o'clock at night, and sometimes much later, and having to go without food most of the day, apart from a snatched pasty here and there until after the matinee, when most generous hospitality was given them in the gracious homes of some of the most notable people in the county.

In 1941 Mr. Peirce, with the co-operation of a few good friends unable to resist the call of the bard, founded the Harrogate Shakespearian Festival, and in five seasons he produced twenty-two plays. Here he was fortunate in having unlimited talent on which to draw, as hundreds of Civil Servants were stationed in Harrogate during that time.

On returning to Cornwall in 1946 Ernest Peirce received numerous requests to bring the Festival to life again, but it was not until 1948, when plans were put before the Penzance Council, that they graciously consented to the loan of Penlee Memorial Park for this purpose. Good friends amongst the local amateurs came to his aid, and he presented two plays, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Twelfth Night*. The season of two weeks, in spite of indifferent weather, was so successful that the Penzance Council decided to build the first Municipal Open-Air Theatre in Cornwall, with a raised stage, and terraced seating, and install a special lighting system—in fact, take over the whole project as an added attraction to the town. For 1949 three plays, *As You Like It*, *The Merry Wives*

and *The Merchant of Venice*, were cast and rehearsed over a period of twelve weeks. All the members of the company are amateurs and they, together with the staff and Mr. Peirce, have given their services free of charge. They consider themselves well rewarded by the magnificent patronage of their performances by the public. The season was so successful this year that it had to be extended for a further week.

When the idea of a Cornish Shakespearian Festival was started many years ago, it was reported as being the work of "a madman", a remark which to some people in this mundane world might seem correct. But Mr. Peirce has always felt that he has a mission to keep the works of the world's greatest dramatist alive, and he is now realizing with, perhaps, some degree of vanity that his ideas were not without justification. There is the possibility that the Festival may develop into a winter season, and Mr. Peirce hopes that those who followed him during the summer may be sufficiently keen to do the same in the winter.

GEORGINA PENNY.

#### INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DRAMA COURSE

For some years past the Cornwall Education Authorities have organized an International Youth Camp during the summer. Last year it was decided to include a week's Drama Course for those interested. To this end I applied for and obtained permission from H.M. Office of Works to use the precincts of Restormel Castle, Lostwithiel, as an operational base, the camp being pitched in a field near by. It was obvious that this unique setting would in itself stimulate the students' imagination. The high circular walls of the ancient castle, set upon a hill and open to the sky, surveyed the Cornish countryside to the distant sea.

Some fifty per cent of the campers elected to take part, boys and girls of five nationalities—French, Belgian, German, Austrian and British. The language problem was a minor one, as only those with a working knowledge of English were admitted to the camp. The first session of the Course took the form of a lecture by a young local historian, which was given informally within the castle walls at sunset, with the campers squatting on the grass. After this I presented them with a challenge. Here was a castle, apparently dead and in ruins—could we, working together for a week, by means of the power of drama, and the historical knowledge we had gained, revive the corpse? It would involve hard work—plenty of it. I had no ready-made play to put into rehearsal.

We should have to create it out of the human drama known to have been enacted within the castle walls. Then I introduced them to a fact, which I had discovered by chance during my own research into the history of the castle, and which was stranger than fiction. The last day of our course happened to fall on August 21st. On the morning of that very day, 304 years earlier, Sir Richard Grenville, "the King's General in the West", had stormed and captured Restormel Castle from the Roundheads. Here was a stepping-off stone for our play—could we resurrect the events of that day? The idea clearly seized on the students' imagination, and during the interested discussion that ensued it was obvious that the challenge had been taken up. Then and there the play was born.

We took as our theme "what happens when the present touches the past?" sensing the refreshing possibility of comedy, especially when it was decided to invent a Wellsian time-machine for transporting our audience back to August 21st, 1644. In the fading light we sketched out plans for a production. A stage-manager was appointed to be responsible for sound effects and the making of properties; a wardrobe mistress to take over the costumes which I had made available beforehand, knowing the limited time at our disposal. It was decided to seek the Cornwall Music Adviser's advice on the music of the period, when it transpired that one student was a skilled recorder player. Plans for advance publicity in Lostwithiel were laid, after which we agreed to let the big idea lie fallow in our imagination during the night. At the camp supper that evening shining eyes and excited discussions marked the stirring of the team spirit.

Early next morning, basking in the sunshine within the castle walls, we evolved the Plot, which was built round the actual characters of the period, and we decided to use the magnificent gateway, the ramparts, and the entrance to the underground passage—now block up—as part of our setting. We discussed the shape of the play, and decided that our drama should be built round the relationship between Sir Richard Grenville and a young Roundhead lad captured by the Royalist soldiers, the reactions of his mother—a widow woman suspected of witchcraft and prophecy—and his two pretty sisters, brought up to the castle for Sir Richard's amusement. The events would include a presentation of "St. George and the Dragon" by the Village Mummers, followed by a folk dance of the period. The plot should reach its climax with Sir Richard's cruelty to the young Roundhead, and the theme culminate in the intervention of the Present, attempted by "a Woman in the

Audience ", as a result of which the time-machine would be blown sky-high, and all the characters from the past disappear.

We decided not to put the play into writing but to build it on improvisation. A points script was made to ensure that none of the necessary facts were omitted. We then proceeded to cast the main characters, and to appoint a prompter, who undertook to make a points prompt for her own use. The rehearsals that followed were particularly interesting for the remarkable degree of concentration evinced by the cast as a whole. This was their own play in the making, to which they were all contributing. The spontaneous speech proved a problem at first, but with practice the facility grew. We agreed, because of the time factor, to make no attempt to get back to the kind of English used in that period, although, by common consent, all modern slang was rejected.

Early in the week someone brought up the news from Lostwithiel, "There is a coughing ghost who haunts the Castle". Instantly it was decided to incorporate this fact by inflicting our Roundhead soldier with a hacking cough. So the play grew. In one of the tents a small party of enthusiasts were creating the time-machine, while two young Belgians, versed in the art of papier maché, produced a dragon's head fearful to behold, for the Mummer's Play. In another a working party was fitting costumes and effecting the necessary alterations. Rehearsal defections were met with, and overcome through the strength of the general team spirit, but, in spite of this, many of us were astonished to find our production ready for the really enormous audience which awaited us on the fateful day.

What was the value of it all? A stimulant to international friendship? Undoubtedly. A useful exercise in concentration? That, too. But perhaps the question is best answered by a remark of one of the cast, overheard after the performance: "Well, that castle looked dead when we first saw it—now it seems so much alive that we will never forget it!".

F. W. COLLINGWOOD SELBY.

## BOOKS OF THE QUARTER

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CORNWALL. *By Claude Berry.* Robert Hale, 15s.

I could wish that bardic initiation at the Gorsedd conferred the gift of tongues, so that one review of this book might have been written in the Cornish and another in English. Both would sincerely recommend it, for it is full of interest, easily read and thoroughly Cornish, but how explain to the outsider that it is as Cornish in what it leaves out as in what it brings in? As a north coast man, born and bred in Padstow, Mr. Berry encourages the deplorable heresy that the true Cornwall begins west of the Fal (although, by some geographical fiction, making sure to include Morwenstow), and can therefore proffer an index in which there occurs no Trelawny, and a reference to Father Bernard Walke of St. Hilary is not balanced by any to Bishop Colenso of St. Austell. He can talk about the screen in Crantock Church, near Newquay, without any mention of that in St. Marnach, Lanreath, where there are still paintings on the panels—at least, on one side, for when an improving rector proposed that he should clean off one set and the parish the other, the parish fortunately dallied. There is no mention, either, of the great houses of Cotehele, Port Eliot, or the dream-haunting front of Morval—when dreams were pleasant things and not the very raw material for Jungian interpretations. There are as many pockets of pure Cornishness left in the east as in the west, and Penwith's boast of privacy is bringing its own retribution. It is odd that Mr. Berry can maintain that, as between districts, "all the asperities which once marked our relations are now as smooth as the slate headstones in our churchyards". The influence of Truro must be very close if he can really believe that the official hyphen has made all that difference between Redruth and Camborne.

But, having cast some aspersions from across the Fal, indeed from across the Fowey, all in the family, let me assure readers, one and all, that this is a book well worth the buying, either to browse upon or dip

into. The sketches of Cornish characters are admirable : such as that of Nevill Northey Burnard, the master carver, borne to his pauper funeral by masons taken from their work on the church where one of his best stone medallions hung, and the true answer to the wrecking fictions is given in stories of rescues by lifeboat crews and by individual sailors and fishermen. Mr. Berry appreciates that only honest livelihood can keep a place sweet from decay into sickly quaintness. Of St. Ives, for instance, he writes : " Pictures have succeeded pilchards in giving vitality and activity to what might otherwise have become museum pieces."

Mr. Berry proves himself an author who can see a world in a grain of sand, and his approach has assured authenticity for his book and a colour that belongs. To quote Mr. A. L. Rowse, in his Foreword : " Anyhow, what could be better—Mr. Berry views all Cornwall for us from the angle of Padstow, through the eyes of a Padstow man." What could be better, indeed, except being born in other places in Cornwall as well as Padstow.

R. GLYNN GRYLLS

JAN'S JOURNAL. *By Ronald Duncan.* William Campion, 8s. 6d.

Ronald Duncan is perhaps best known as a poet and playwright, author of that very successful masque play *This Way to the Tomb*, also author of the libretto of Benjamin Britten's opera *The Rape of Lucretia*, and adapter and translator of Jean Cocteau's *The Eagle Has Two Heads*. He is also, however, a farmer, and Cornish readers may remember his racy and pithy account of his years at West Mill, Morwenstow, published under the title *Journal of a Husbandman*. *Jan's Journal*, a selection from the regular Saturday feature of that name which Ronald Duncan contributes to the *Evening Standard*, makes a worthy successor to that earlier volume. It is the work of a man with decided views of his own, not only about farming but about economics, religion, people, the arts, and a variety of aesthetic as well as physical pleasures. What is perhaps so fascinating is the combination of so good a writer with (one feels) so practical a farmer. Perhaps it is this fusion that lends to Mr. Duncan's prose a sharp, sometimes acid, quality. Here is no wordiness : quite the reverse. " Job is not a biblical character. He is a contemporary figure, he is any farmer." Or " Summer is a promise, winter is a certainty." And " Old superstitions are facts which science has not yet discovered." And again, scathingly, he writes of the modern mobile worker : " Conscious of his rights, he is unaware of his obligations. He takes, farming is

giving. You cannot run a herd of cows in shifts, with one eye on the clock."

Again and again among these wise and witty notes one comes across similar pungent epithets which do, in fact, sum up the present problems of Britain and agriculture. To supplement his imagery, Ronald Duncan tells a large number of neat and apposite tales, of dealings with marketing boards, of Government red tape among farm workers, of official obstacles that seem almost designed to prevent farmers increasing production rather than help. But, as befits a born writer, he is always conscious of the individuals around him in his daily life, the postman, the vicar, the neighbour farmer, the verger, the water-diviner, the publican, and so on. He brings them, and his farming world, to life with swift, sure strokes which will entertain the reader, whether he be countryman or townsman.

HENRY TREVOR

WEST COUNTRY SHORT STORIES. *Edited by Lewis Wilshire.*

Faber & Faber, 12s. 6d.

The revival of regionalism in Britain is both noticeable and welcome. Sympathy and support should be given to all endeavours to revitalize local cultural developments, whether these efforts take the form of crafts, music, painting, dancing or literature. There does, however, arise the danger of an excess of enthusiasm outweighing accuracy of judgment, and one wonders if this may not apply to recent attempts to hail a "West Country" literary revival. One can grasp, historically and culturally, the fact of a regional literature emanating from Wales or Scotland, Cornwall or the Isle of Man ; or, for that matter, from a well-defined county region such as Yorkshire (there is a Yorkshire Dialect Society which publishes its own magazine and books). But "the West Country"—that is a bit vague. Where and what is the West Country ? One leading journal defines the area as consisting of Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Wiltshire, Somerset, Gloucestershire and Hampshire, but Lewis Wilshire, in his introduction to this volume of short stories, lops off the last two counties altogether. In her recent book on *The West of England* Ruth Manning-Sanders confined the West Country still further—to Cornwall, Devon and Somerset. She did at least proceed to explain her reasons for such an interpretation, making the valid point that once upon a time Cornwall, Devon and a part of Somerset formed the ancient Celtic kingdom of

Damnonia. Mr. Wilshire, on the other hand, blandly announces : "Incidentally, I've taken the West Country to comprise the counties of Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Wiltshire, Somerset and Gloucestershire"—and leaves it at that. It is difficult to avoid a suspicion that something is being forced, especially when a glance at the list of "West Country" contributors reveals that they include writers from Lancashire, Norfolk, London, Kent and elsewhere beyond Mr. Wilshire's elastic zone. Daniel Defoe (biographical notes admit "he was not, of course, a West Countryman") bats for Somerset. John Atkins, another "Somerset" contributor, was born in Norfolk, and happens to live in Dorset not Somerset. Elizabeth Myers, who was born in Manchester and spent most of her short life in London, appears for Dorset with a story set largely in Cockney dialect. Richard Jefferies, Ronald Duncan, A. G. Street, John Moore and Edith Olivier, who have achieved literary distinction *not* as short story writers but as essayists, poets, playwrights, historians, etc., all get their County caps as West Country short story writers. And so it goes on—a thoroughly unconvincing attempt to create a myth that six very dissimilar English counties have mysteriously merged into an entity that provides a literature entirely of its own.

There is perhaps a handful of outstanding living short story writers habitually writing about areas falling within Mr. Wilshire's chosen domain, and fortunately these are included : L. A. G. Strong, Henry Williamson, Jan Stewer, T. F. Powys, H. A. Manhood, A. E. Coppard and (though it is thirty years since he wrote anything) Charles Lee. Even so, only two of these reside in the county which they represent. By mixing in a few reprinted classics, and at least half a dozen contributions by younger writers that are not stories at all but sketches, the material has been puffed out to the publisher's requisite length. The resulting unevenness is comment enough. Let Mr. Wilshire, a Gloucestershire man, produce a volume of stories by writers of his native county by all means. It would be much more legitimate than the present volume of *West Country Short Stories*, about which perhaps the final irony is that nearly one-third of the contents is made up of Cornish stories ("Q", Charles Lee, H. D. Lowry, A. L. Rowse, S. Baring-Gould, Frances Bellerby, H. A. Manhood, Ronald Duncan, C. C. Vyvyan). And from this side of the Tamar Mr. Wilshire's five other West Country counties are all East, anyway !

VALENTINE EAMES.

LITTLE REVIEWS ANTHOLOGY, 1949. Edited by Denys Val Baker.  
Methuen, 10s. 6d.

Until the P.E.N. Club published Denys Val Baker's history of the little review—a task later undertaken in America by a triumvirate of scholars—there was curiously little conscious recognition of the debt owed by twentieth-century writing and art to this form of publication. Fortunately, *Little Reviews, 1914-43*, and the annual anthologies which Mr. Val Baker has edited since that important little book appeared, have made even the larger public aware that the history of serious writing in the past thirty or forty years is very largely the history of small, adventurous and often obscure publications. To-day our less illiterate bishops may solemnly discuss T. S. Eliot, O.M., in our most respectable Sunday newspapers ; but there was a time when the only persons who had heard of Thomas Stearns Eliot were the readers, never more than three thousand in number, of Harriet Monroe's *Poetry*.

In the introduction to *Little Reviews Anthology, 1949*, the fifth in the series, Mr. Val Baker remarks on the regional trend in present-day literary reviews, a sign that "instead of taking everything as it is dished out from London, people are creating their own arts and activities". I need hardly add that the *Cornish Review* shows what is being done in Cornwall, where the tradition of independence was strong long before the "Londonization" of the arts (only, after all, the provincialism of the West End) threatened us with a paralysing mediocrity.

This anthology contains, for the reviewer, a hopeless embarrassment of riches—the year's best, I should say, in the short story, the essay, poetry and criticism.

John Betjeman, Ronald Bottrall (of Camborne), George Barker and Louis Adeane are among the poets with Cornish associations, while Littleton Powys writes with great charm of the most astonishing of all West Country families, concluding with a portrait of John Cowper, "that old brother of mine . . . almost at the end of his magical quest upon earth".

The book would be treasurable for any one of its critical essays : G. S. Fraser on Auden, Paul Potts on Orwell, Pamela Hansford Johnson on Joyce Cary and Walter Allen on D. H. Lawrence, a calm and just appraisal that was not possible when the tumult and the shouting were more savage than the "savage pilgrimage" itself had been.

P. H. Newby, T. C. Worsley, C. Day Lewis, Dylan Thomas, Vernon Watkins, Alan Ross, V. S. Pritchett, Daniel George (*An Alphabet of Literary Prejudice*) and Herbert Read (*The Fate of Modern Painting*) are some of

the other names represented. As for Quentin Crisp's *The Declining Nude*—it left me inartistically recumbent from laughter.

J. H. MARTIN.

THE SCUFFLER. *By Gavin Douglas.* Robert Hale, 8s. 6d.

Gavin Douglas, who lives at Lamorna, has added another volume to this island's ever-growing literature of the sea. At a time when so many townsmen are writing books about the country for townsmen and landsmen writing about the sea for landsmen, it is refreshing to read something less artificial. The author writes from experience and from the heart ; he follows no vogue ; he simply allows his pen to flow hurriedly in the wake of memory, often becoming so engrossed in presenting a scene or atmosphere that he forgets the plan of the book entirely.

Mr. Douglas has a gift of quick, vivid presentation ; he assembles his memories around the deck of a single small coaster, and, using the ship as a stage, presents characters and events in pleasant succession. The result is not, as the dust jacket blurb states, a serious novel, nor is it "new in sea literature", but the reading sailor will smile to himself when he finds real incidents and real people coming alive on the old steel decks.

And what of the reading landsman ? Well, forget the blue of Southern Seas ; forget the moon of calm waters and the howl of a gale in the masts of a square-rigger. What is left ? The unromantic, ceaseless strife between the sailor and the sea. Mr. Douglas says : "The sea that takes so prodigally, gives prodigally. In its greatness men become great. The sea abhors mediocrity." True enough. And in the small coasters of the shallow waters there is an element of greatness.

JOHN FREDERIC GIBSON

TEA WITH MR. ROCHESTER. *By Frances Towers.*

Michael Joseph, 7s. 6d.

This single volume of short stories by Frances Towers, who died in 1948, is at once a treasure house of poetic subtleties and a reminder of what has been lost to literature by the cutting off of so rare a source of inspiration. It is fitting that *Tea with Mr. Rochester* should receive its tribute from the *Cornish Review*, since the author, though not herself Cornish, kept a special place in her heart for Cornwall, and was, in fact, resident in Looe throughout the war. During her stay in Looe Frances Towers wrote the drafts of several of these stories, and Cornish readers

will not be slow to place the Penorth of *What Must Be, Shall Be*, a story that is certainly amongst the best in the book.

Confronted by a collection of short stories, the reviewer is inevitably assailed by the temptation to particularize. The present volume, however, has so perfect a shape and is so strong in its impact that to lift even one of the stories from its setting seems almost an act of vandalism. If a choice is compelled, I would personally nominate as representative of this writer's subtle art at its most compelling : *Violet, The Chosen and the Rejected, What Must Be, Shall Be*, the title story, *The Golden Rose*, and that early masterpiece in miniature *Mrs. Egerton*, which first appeared in *The London Mercury* in the reign of Jolly Jack Squire. Yet there is no story in this book that is not worthily included, and the reader in search of the uncommon may dip here where he will, without fear of being disappointed. Such a reader will—if he has any sensibility at all—quickly discover that he is in a private world of enchantment where beauty stalks hand in hand with irony, and the sad ghosts of the English poets, from Sir Philip Sydney to Yeats, make their entrances and their exits with a minimum of fuss and a maximum of effect. And if he does not learn something more than he already knows about poetry and people, then he must indeed be an unusual sort of person.

MICHAEL WILLIAMS

#### DEVON AND CORNWALL : Youth Hostels Regional Book.

*Youth Hostels Association*, 9d.

An article on "Books on Devon and Cornwall" is part of a mass of information for the walker contained in the new edition of the Youth Hostels Regional Book on Devon and Cornwall. It is encouraging to learn that there are now nine hostels in Cornwall, situated near such ideal centres as Land's End, Falmouth, Padstow, Port Isaac, Mevagissey, Tintagel, Helston, Gwithian and Davidstow. Further hostels will be opened, it is promised, as and when premises can be obtained, in the districts of Launceston, Perranporth, Marazion, Porthleven, Fowey, Looe and Liskeard. The Youth Hostels Association was formed in 1930 "to help all, but especially young people, to a greater knowledge, care and love of the countryside, particularly by providing hostels or other simple accommodation for them in their travels". In these days such work is more important than ever, and all who are interested are urged to seek further details from the Y.H.A. Regional Office, Belmont House, Stoke, Plymouth.

## READERS' FORUM

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SIR,

Everyone knows that Cornwall is seething with geniuses who want to be alone. They demonstrate this urge for solitude by massing together, most week-ends, in groups and cliques and gaggles, and emitting conjoint commination against The World. This, of course, means everybody in the world except themselves. The World, they say, misunderstands them. Not, they hasten to add, if anyone is still listening, that they care tuppence about being understood. They spit on Public Opinion. In fact, they despise everyone and everything, themselves excepted, and in particular they despise money.

The attitude of the bogus genius to money is strange in the extreme. When a bearded figure, garbed like a gigolo going to a regatta, tells you that he despises money but, at the same time, wallows in the beer and cigarettes which other people's money buys, you begin to feel rather puzzled. Can it be, you speculate to yourself, that this palpably pure-souled and martyred Bohemian, who does not object to the mutations of money in liquidated form, has an aesthetic aversion from the sight of money itself, in the shape of coins or notes? No, this is not the case. If you offer him a pound, he does not wince in genteel agony, and shudderingly hand it back to you. He pockets it, in one jet-propelled movement, and then, as they used to say in Western movies, vamooses, muttering something about seeing you later.

The truth is that the bogus genius loves money but hates earning it. After all, if you want to sell a picture nowadays it must have something about it, even if it is only a frame. Many of the pseudo-painters reclining in Cornwall have not enough craftsmanship to frame a picture, and the patience required for such a sordid task is beneath them.

I suppose artists in Cornwall (and by this I mean not only painters but those who follow the arts in any form) may be classified much as follows.

There are professional artists, who live by the proceeds of their work.

There are artists who sell their work fairly well and support themselves, in part, by some other work. These are as much the genuine article as the first group: and, in fact, the temptation to work solely for popularity may be less, much less, if there is some subsidiary source of income, private or earned, to keep a little bread and butter on the plate.

There is also the diminishing tribe of *poseurs*, pretending to be artists, who have enough unearned income to live on, and drape themselves in languid attitudes round chairs in public places. This dying race, it seems to me, does little harm. Indeed, if public merriment is a desirable thing, it does good.

But then there are the strange beings who cannot sell their work, have no private means of support, and refuse to work in any other sphere. This is legitimate, if they do not moan about it. It is a course that has been followed by many a genius in the past.

But your true genius does not go about proclaiming that the world owes him a living. By cold choice he has dedicated himself to his vocation, and, rather than desert it, he faces starvation as an act of free-will.

Not so the pseudo-artist. Unable to produce anything worth selling, blaming the public, and not his work, for this, disdaining any alternative form of trying to support himself, he becomes a parasite on the district he has cursed with his presence. Professing to hate money, he greedily and grossly exults in the comforts other people's money provides.

Most commonly an exhibitionist by nature, the pseudo-artist is the hanger-on who brings creative art into disrepute among the uncreating majority. The theme of his talk is eternally himself: the burden of his plaint is always the chance he never got. And the sight of the success of another fills him with petty, yet splenetic and dangerous, despair.

The pseudo-artist will usually explain to you that he is absorbing the atmosphere of Cornwall. So he is, like a sponge.

*Windswept Cottage, Nancledra, Penzance.*

ARTHUR CADDICK

SIR,

The *Cornish Review* is now clearly established as a leading journal in the West Country and its reputation has reached far and wide, if I may judge from the correspondence I have received in connection with my own contribution to the first number—from as far away as California and India—and also casual remarks from acquaintances who have, as far as I was aware, no knowledge of Cornwall or its own periodical review.

However, I feel I must utter a word of protest against Mr. Ivor Thomas's sweeping generalizations in his article "County or Country?". Really, sir, to maintain that "very few Cornishmen have any interest in the revival of a Celtic language" and "few of them have any interest in the Celtic language of pre-Reformation Cornwall" is grossly inaccurate. I have been preparing a *Handbook of the Cornish Language*, giving its history, literature, short grammar, and extracts from the remains, for several years, on and off, and when I mention the fact to all sorts of people, I find an immediate display of interest. There is no doubt at all that a very large number of Cornishmen are interested in this work, and also many people who do not know Cornwall itself but are interested in its past as well as its present and future, and feel that a study of the old language would give them a better insight into things in general.

Cornish literature may not be of the highest order in itself, but, as Mr. Morton Nance has pointed out, there can be no doubt that if the language had not been subjected to such strong English influence in the sixteenth century it could very well have produced a literature comparable to that of Middle English. The regular contributions of writers like "Mordon" to *Old Cornwall* show that by learning this old language we may well discover many a new interest. As Henry Jenner remarked, Cornishmen learn Cornish "because they are Cornishmen", and "the reason . . . is sentimental, and not in the least practical, and if everything sentimental were banished from it, the world would not be as pleasant a place as it is". It is for this reason that ten thousand men and women, young and old alike, have taken the trouble to learn Cornish and why several hundreds whom I have met all over the world have shown an interest in my *Handbook*—a number hardly to be passed over as "a few".

*Balliol College, Oxford.*

P. A. LANYON-ORGILL

SIR,

On rereading the Summer Number I think that Ivor Thomas is really much more insulting than Sydney Horler, though I have no doubt the latter will arouse far more wrath than the former. It is one thing to attack Cornwall for its peculiarities, even when these attacks are so unsubstantiated as are Mr. Horler's, but it is far worse to deny that Cornwall *has* any peculiarities and proceed to recommend the removal of even the last shreds and vestiges of separateness. To my mind, the era of the Centralized Authority is distinctly on the wane, and the only hope is for an increased Regionalism—or, where racial differences permit, Nationalism—so that small areas, at any rate, may be immunized from the poison which emanates from the great capital cities, and, by the creation of new frontiers, preserved as oases of right living. That is why I am so enthusiastic in my support for the Republic of Ireland, and that is why those who put Britain first and their own true country second (be that country Ireland, Scotland, Wales or Cornwall) infuriate me more than dozens of Sydney Horlers, whose attacks on Cornwall are flattering in that they proclaim the outsider's recognition of Cornwall's nationhood where some Cornishmen of the Ivor Thomas variety take pride in denying it.

MICHAEL GARDNER

*Idle Rocks, East Cliff, East Looe.*

SIR,

If Sydney Horler does not like Cornwall, why does he stay here? And if stay he must, can he not at least have the decency to keep silent about his hosts.

I have just returned home after many years of exile in England. I am amazed by the kindness and goodness that I have met. The Cornish have their faults, like all human beings, and, being a minority, some of them have inevitably developed certain universal traits of minority psychology, clannishness and a keen eye to the naive chance. I could counter all Mr. Horler's accusations against us by similar accusations against Londoners, but this does not mean that I regard all Londoners as villains. They are often admirable people, in their own place. On the other hand, I would not insult a farmyard by comparing certain aspects of London morals to it.

The sooner Mr. Horler leaves Cornwall, the better will it be for everyone else.

HELENA CHARLES

*Higher Nimmis, Redruth.*

SIR,

Heartiest congratulations to you for the fine effort you have made in publishing the *Cornish Review*, which undoubtedly is the magazine that Cornish-minded people have felt the need of for many years. At a time like this, when the bookshops are full of "trash" and unhealthy periodicals, it is appreciated more so. Our Cornwall, which has lost so much of its culture and traditions, needs people like yourself at the helm in the uphill struggle to preserve those that remain. May you meet with every success.

I would like to add my voice to the already great numbers who have protested at Sidney Horler's outburst against "us"—the Cornish People. It is, indeed, sad to see such bigoted, ignorant people coming to Celtic Cornwall, enjoying the full benefits of our lovely county, and then coming back with a tirade of abuse and lies against the inhabitants; I liken it to the dog biting the hand that feeds it. We, the Cornish people,

welcome the strangers, or "foreigners", if you like the expression, amongst us ; being one of the once great Celtic peoples, we bear no hate against living thing, but, as history proves, every generation of Cornishmen have had to bear a cross always made heavier by the Horlers of that generation. It is our individuality that they dislike. Probably they fear a nationalist party in Cornwall. Or is it all "sham"? Are they really afraid of themselves? Cornwall and the Cornish were civilized and cultured when the Horler type were still barbarian.

E. CYRIL CURNOW

*7 Sea View Terrace, St. Ives.*

SIR,

As it is improbable that the natives like Mr. Horler any better than he likes them, the remedy is in his own hands. Let him leave Cornwall as rapidly as possible, and not return.

RONALD BOTTRALL

*4 Fore Street, Madron.*

SIR,

I congratulate you on the second issue of your *Cornish Review*. I should, however, like to say how much I abominate the letters of two of your correspondents, Mr. Peter Lanyon and Mr. Sydney Horler. I can only presume that lavatory walls in Cornwall are so highly glazed that they find it impossible to write on them. I don't think that you need have felt any qualms about telling these two correspondents that their ill-mannered observations could have no place in a magazine intended for adults. One can only assume that as Mr. Horler chooses to live in Cornwall he must find himself quite at home amongst "backward, illiterate and ignorant people", to use Mr. Horler's own words here. I don't know Mr. Lanyon personally, but I rather gather he doesn't like Sven Berlin. There may, or may not, be reason for such dislike, but I should not have thought your magazine was the place for naughty boys to quarrel in.

ERGO JONES

*17b Apsley Road, Clifton, Bristol.*

SIR,

Peter Lanyon's letter in your last number is really so rich in misleading assertions that it is hard to know where to have him first. From your point of view, sir, it is perhaps on his assumption that there exists some kind of ideal of Cornishness towards which your contributors should strive on pain of being declared fit only for the outer darkness beyond the Tamar. And what constitutes this ideal? Workmanlike faith. Simplicity. They are still the most spell-binding of cliches; even an Englishman can be relied upon to feel rather a cad for questioning them. Mr. Lanyon evidently knows a propagandist's trick or two. But he should read more art history: it would teach him that the artistic life of the obscurest tribes in the remotest places is complicated by the most various cross currents of influence. The Cornish are not so very remote, and are obviously not going to escape the sort of internationalism which has affected Scythians, South Sea Islanders and Eskimos. The majority of good artists working in Cornwall come from outside it. Mr. Lanyon's demand for a Cornish orthodoxy may be sincere, but I don't know that it is going to be particularly rewarding if it means that we end up with nothing but Mr. Lanyon.

Mr. Lanyon's attack on the *Cornish Review* is one thing : his sniping at Sven Berlin is quite another. Sven Berlin's article displays conceit, says Mr. Lanyon. But conceit is a very dangerous word to bring into this sort of discussion. Perhaps Mr. Lanyon will think it conceit on my part when I publish my conviction that Sven Berlin's work entitles him to consideration as a figure of European importance. Heaven knows that much of his writing is unskilful, but, after all, he is a sculptor and not a writer. The real point is that anyone of his accomplishment deserves to be heard with respect, no matter how awkward his delivery. The tone of provincial sententiousness with which Mr. Lanyon assails him might itself be taken as indicative of conceit ; perhaps of even less agreeable qualities besides.

BREAN DOUGLAS NEWTON

*The Vicarage, Mevagissey.*

SIR,

Please do not count on us in future as advertisers in the *Cornish Review*. I am deeply chagrined that any advertisement of ours appears in a publication which opens its columns to such wanton and outrageous insults as are contained in Mr. Horler's article, or Miss Peile's picture "Wet Sunday in St. Ives", with its covert sneer at the God-fearing characteristics which—to me—are one of the chief prizes of the town.

H. W. MARTIN,  
Managing Director.

*R. W. Martin (St. Ives) Ltd., 35, 37 and 39 Fore Street, St. Ives.*

## THE CORNISH REVIEW

CONTRIBUTIONS dealing with aspects of Cornish life and culture, also short stories, poems and original paintings or woodcuts, will be considered by the Editor. MSS. should not be more than 2,500 words in length, and must be accompanied by a stamped, addressed envelope.

SUBSCRIPTIONS are urgently needed at all times, and every reader is asked to make a special effort to introduce as many new subscribers as possible. Subscription form will be found on page 109.

ADVERTISEMENTS can be accepted for future issues, and rates and other information will be gladly sent on request. Cornish firms and societies are particularly invited to support a publication whose aim is to link together Cornish people both at home and abroad.

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## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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**M. E. BORG-BANKS.** An irregular officer of the Royal Marine Commandos. Born in Chippenham, Wiltshire, in 1922. Has led a varied Service career ranging from skipper of a fishing vessel in the South China Sea to command of a 15-inch gun turret of a battleship during a bombardment, from jungle operations with the Commandos in Burma to aide-de-camp to the General in Hong Kong. By far his happiest period of service has been as a climbing instructor for the last two years at the Commando Cliff Assault Wing, St. Ives, an occupation which has made him intimate with a host of coves and headlands, both popular and unfrequented, all along the Cornish coast. He is more fond of sea birds than trippers. Interests : mountaineering, music, beer, sailing, soldiering—in that order.

**WALLACE NICHOLS.** Has lived fourteen years at Newlyn, Penzance, where his wife is Curator of the Passmore Edwards Art Gallery. He is nationally known as a poet and historical novelist—his epic novel *Simon Magus* being one of the outstanding of its kind. His first book of poetry was published when he was still at Westminster School (where he won the Gumbleton Prize for English Verse). Among his many volumes of poetry are *The Song of Sharruk*, described as one of the finest poems of the 1914-18 war, *Prometheus in Piccadilly*, *Black Europe*, *The Saga of Judas* (reviewed in *Cornish Review* No. 2), and several verse plays, of which *Laddice* is the latest. He is an expert in the speaking of verse and one of the Directors of the English Festival of Spoken Poetry, held annually in London. In 1948 and this year he was a fellow Director, with Ernest Peirce, of the Cornish Shakespearian Festival.

**GEOFFREY JOHNSON.** Although a Midlander by birth, he writes that he "fell in love with Cornwall" during a long coastal holiday from Plymouth to Land's End and then up the north coast to Tintagel. Was most of all attracted to Looe and Polperro, the setting of his poem in this issue. He is publishing officer of the Poetry Lovers' Fellowship, whose President is Walter de la Mare. His poems have been published in many magazines and anthologies, including Thomas Moult's annual, *The Best Poems* series. His published books of poems include *The Quest Unending* (Selwyn & Blount), *Changing Horizons* (Daniel), *Mother to Son*, *The Scholar*, *The New Road* and *The Timeless Land* (all by Williams & Norgate), and *The Ninth Wave* (Harrap). One of his verse translations, of Rilke's *Autumn Day*, has been set to music by the Cornish composer Mary Plumstead, of Mawnan Smith, Falmouth.

W. J. STRACHAN. Although not Cornish, his family has always been connected with the sea—his mother's family coming from Brixham, Devon—and to this connection he attributes much of his special interest in Cornwall. His poem in this issue was one of a series done following a visit to West Penwith—he also painted several water-colours and oil paintings of the Zennor district. He read English and Modern Languages at Cambridge—the former under Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch—and is now Senior Master in Modern Languages at The College, Bishop's Stortford. Author of *Moments of Tyme* (Sylvan Press), a volume of poems, and translator of many French poems. Married, with two children.

HELENA CHARLES. Aggressively Cornish since early childhood. Born in Calcutta, but lived in Cornwall 1914–1918, and has returned five times since. Since 1948 has lived at Redruth. Her parents met at a Helston Furry Dance, and she is a granddaughter of T. W. Tyacke, of Helston. Detests all forms of totalitarianism and believes in the right of all small peoples and minorities to retain their identity. Member of the Central Committee of European Communities and Regions. She has a "smattering" of Breton, and is now learning Cornish.

REX MILES. A poet, short story writer and part-time lecturer, whose stories and poems on Cornwall and the West Country have appeared in both national and West Country periodicals. Although not Cornish by birth, he lived for a period at Mousehole, Penzance, and knows the county very well.

STANLEY ANGWIN. Born in Penzance in 1883, Sir Stanley is married and has three sons and one daughter. He was educated at East London College (now Queen Mary College) and was made a Fellow of his old College in 1946. After his engineering training with Yarrow & Co. Ltd., he entered the Post Office Engineering Department in 1906, becoming Engineer-in-Chief in 1939. He was appointed Chairman of Cable & Wireless Limited in 1947. He was President of the Institution of Electrical Engineers in 1943–44, and is now Chairman of the Radio Research Board. He has had wide experience of international communications, and as British delegate has attended Telecommunications Conferences throughout the world. He was knighted in 1941 and received the K.B.E. in 1945. Other honours include D.S.O., M.C., T.D., B.Sc., M.I.C.E., and M.I.E.E.

JOHN PENWITH. The familiar *nom de plume* of a Cornish journalist and contributor to the *Cornishman*. He has specialized in writing about the literary, artistic and antiquarian aspects of Cornwall, and claims that he has written millions of words on the subjects. Has a particular gift for linking up the old with the new aspects of Cornish life. A regular contributor to the *Western Morning News* and *Western Evening Herald*, as well as to many national newspapers. He is author of the official Penzance Town Guide for 1950.

C. C. JAMES. Born at Comford, Gwennap. Early in life he went to Mexico and was engaged in iron and brass founding and general engineering. Resided there over thirty years and returned to England in 1939. A keen Freemason, he is a Past Grand Master of the York Grand Lodge of Mexico, Past Commander of Ivanhoe Commandery of Knight Templars and representative for several years of the Grand Lodge of England before the York Grand Lodge. He is a member of the Cornish Gorsedd, Vice-President of the Penzance Old Cornwall Society and of the Royal Geological Society of Cornwall, and Hon. Secretary of the Morrab Library, Penzance. He has recently published a *History* of his native Parish of Gwennap.

DAVID HAUGHTON. Born in London 1924, and spent early life there, in India, Sussex and Kent. After a short period at the Slade School of Art, London, he paid a visit to Cornwall about three years ago, and has made it his home since then. Writes that he has made himself "useless at everything but painting since the age of six and now wishes he hadn't". His paintings have been shown in London galleries, and he recently held an exhibition in St. Ives, together with John Wells. He exhibited at the 1948 Crypt Exhibition, St. Ives, and at this year's Penwith Society Exhibition, of which he is a founder member.

FRANK JAMESON. Born London, but has now lived for several years in Cornwall, at St. Ives and now Falmouth, where he has his own art gallery. He is a painter of portraits and figure subjects, working mostly in oil. Exhibitor at Royal Academy, Paris Salon and the principal exhibitions in this country and abroad. Member of the Royal West of England Academy and the St. Ives Society of Artists.

LEONARD J. FULLER. After being educated at Dulwich College and Royal Academy Schools, he was awarded the British Institution Scholarship in painting in 1913. Many of his works have been hung at the Royal Academy and other galleries, here and abroad. He has been awarded the *Mention Honorable* and *Medaille D'argent* of the Paris Salon, and was elected a Royal Cambrian Academician in 1939. He has had a distinguished career as an art teacher, including ten years as Teacher of Painting at St. John's Wood Art Schools and ten years as Assistant Art Master at Dulwich College. In 1938 he started the St. Ives School of Painting, to meet the need for a centralized school of art in St. Ives, to assist the many resident and visiting art students. He was formerly Chairman of the St. Ives Society of Artists and is now Chairman of the new Penwith Society of Arts in Cornwall.

BEN NICHOLSON. Born at Uxbridge, Middlesex, the son of Sir William Nicholson and his wife Mabel Pryde, both important painters of their generation. After an academic training he broke away and became interested, in 1918, in the cubist movement, being particularly influenced by Wyndham Lewis, Picasso and Mondrian. Since then he has become one of the leading figures in the field of abstract painting, and his works are exhibited in galleries in U.S.A., Britain and other European countries. He believes that "abstraction is the liberation of colour and form as a means of expression". For many years he has lived at Carbis Bay, St. Ives, and his recent work has reflected a strong influence of the Cornish landscape and atmosphere. A large retrospective exhibition of his work was held in London in 1947, and at the end of 1948 Lund Humphries issued a de luxe volume of reproductions of his works. A smaller volume has been issued in the Penguin series.

**GUIDO MORRIS.** Born 1910, when the sun was in Cancer : son, grandson and great-grandson of clergy. Educated mainly by his father, living in a country rectory in Devonshire : trained as a naturalist, learned English, received a grounding in Latin, and acquired bibliophilic habits. Began work as personal laboratory assistant to Dr. S. Zuckerman, 1932, incurring considerable influence from this training. In 1935 abandoned scientific studies to print, and came, in 1936, into intimate association with the visionary Gordon Craig, then in Paris. Served as a private in the R.A.M.C. in 1940-44, and under the encouragement of a Jewish officer began the study of Hebrew. Writes poetry and draws. Founded The Latin Press in April 1935, at Langford, near Bristol, and moved to Saint Ives in April 1946. The Press is situated on The Wastrel, in old Saint Ives, near to The Island.

**MARK HOLLOWAY.** He claims "ancestors in St. Neot's Churchyard", and before the war lived in West Penwith. He has written a number of poems and articles, published in little reviews, and gathered in anthologies, and for a year has written a weekly column on non-political matters in *The Socialist Leader*. He recently completed a book in Dublin and is now writing one on nineteenth-century Utopian communities. Obliged to live in London, he loves "the country by the sea".

**DAVID LEWIS.** Born at Pope's Hole, Hants., and lived some years in South Africa before coming to Cornwall. "A myopic misanthrope in veldskoens", he writes. Publications include *End and Beginning* (poems), *The Naked Eye* (criticism), *The Sculptures of Lippy Lipschitz*, *The Cape Malays*, and two essays on Race Relations in South Africa (Oxford University Press). Assistant Editor of *Politics and Letters*. He has lectured in several parts of Cornwall, and is now working on a novel. Is particularly well qualified to write on Higher Tregerthen, as he lived there during the past year. Now lives at Saint Ives.

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**FRANK MICHELL.** Born 1908. Educated Redruth County School. Entered business which the family has carried on in the town for generations. Member of the Royal Institution of Cornwall and of the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society. Hon. Secretary of Redruth Old Cornwall Society. Awarded R.C.P.S. Sir Edward Nicholl Silver Medal, 1946. Author *Notes on the History of Redruth* (published 1948) and compiler of other local historical articles.

**J. P. HODIN.** Doctor of Philosophy of Charles University, Prague, now resident in Newlyn, Penzance. He has written several books on modern artists, and contributes regularly to leading art magazines in Britain and abroad. He has recently written in *Penguin New Writing* for the Penwith Society of Arts in Cornwall.

**GEORGINA PENNY.** Born in Middlesex. She was brought up and educated in Oxford, and later trained for a ballet and stage career. Came to Cornwall in 1928 and now lives at Ludgvan. She is interested in Cornish folk-lore and has had several Cornish legends broadcast. Wrote *Uncle Charley*, a three-act play which was produced by her husband, Ernest Peirce, at Penzance Pavilion, and is now on tour.

**FRANCES COLLINGWOOD SELBY.** County Drama Adviser to Cornwall since October 1947, appointed by the Cornwall Music and Drama Committee in conjunction with Cornwall Education Authorities to help adult and youth drama groups. Prior to this, as a colleague of Miss Frances Mackenzie in the training department of the British Drama League, for six years she acted as lecturer and instructor at British Drama League Courses and travelled widely over the country giving lecture demonstrations and week-end schools and adjudicating festivals.

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